New York Times Bestselling Author of *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*

John C. Maxwell

The 360° Leader

Developing Your Influence *from* Anywhere *in the* Organization

VISIT…

THE 360° LEADER

DEVELOPING YOUR INFLUENCE FROM ANYWHERE IN THE ORGANIZATION

JOHN C. MAXWELL

THOMAS NELSON
Since 1798

NASHVILLE DALLAS MEXICO CITY RIO DE JANEIRO

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO DAN REILAND—

A FRIEND
A STUDENT
A TEACHER
A PARTNER
—A 360-DEGREE LEADER

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SECTION 1

THE MYTHS OF LEADING FROM THE MIDDLE OF AN ORGANIZATION

These are classic pictures of leadership: William Wallace leading the charge of his warriors against the army that would oppress his people and him. Winston Churchill defying the Nazi threat as much of Europe collapsed. Mahatma Gandhi leading the two-hundred-mile march to the sea to protest the Salt Act. Mary Kay Ash going off on her own to create a world-class organization. Martin Luther King Jr. standing before the Lincoln Memorial challenging the nation with his dream of reconciliation.

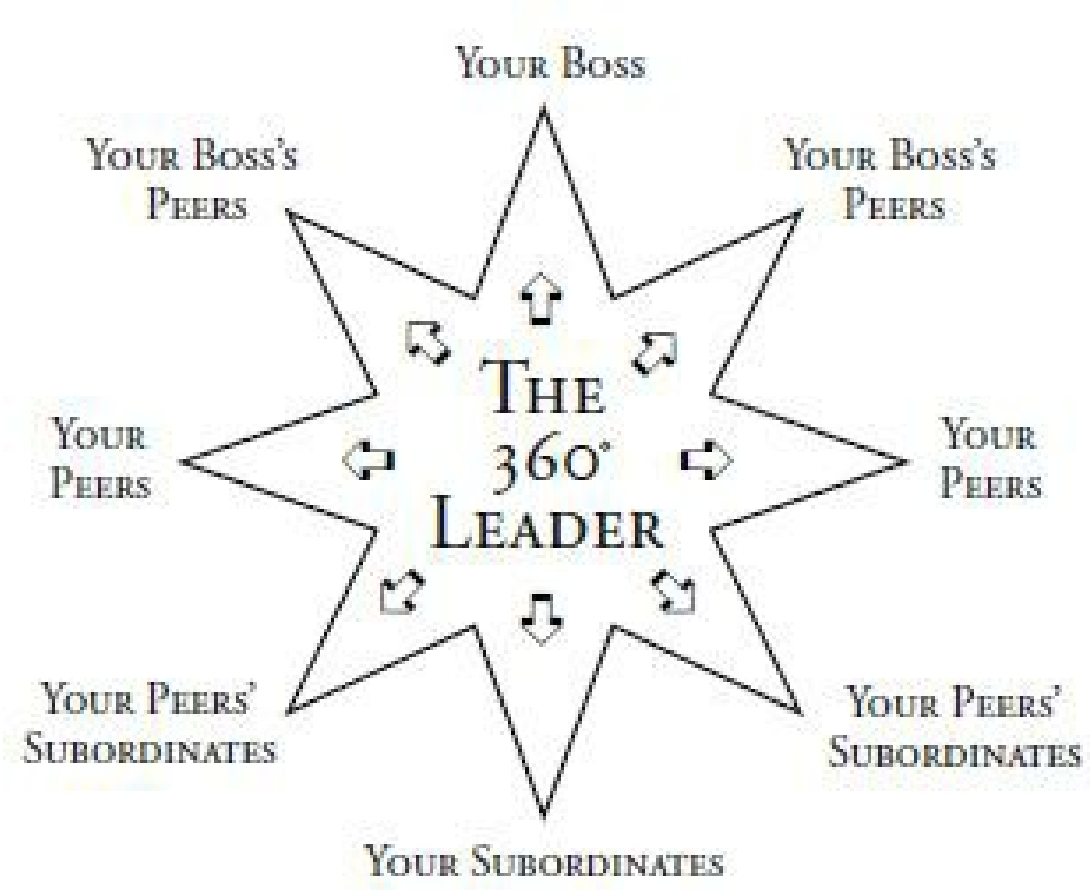
Each of these people was a great leader and impacted hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people. Yet these pictures can also be misleading. The reality is that 99 percent of all leadership occurs not from the top but from the middle of an organization. Usually, an organization has only one person who is *the* leader. So what do you do if you are not that one person?

Ninety-nine percent of all leadership occurs not from the top but from the middle of an organization.

I've taught leadership for nearly thirty years. And in just about every conference I've taught, someone has come up to

me and said something such as, “I like what you teach about leadership, but I can’t apply it. I’m not the main leader. And the person I work under is, *at best,* average.”

Is that where you live? Are you working somewhere in the middle of your organization? You may not be a follower at the lowest level of the organization, but you’re not the top dog either—yet you still want to lead, to make things happen, to make a contribution.



You do not have to be held hostage to your circumstances or position. You do not have to be the CEO to lead effectively. And you can learn to make an impact through your leadership

even if you report to someone who is not a good leader. What's the secret? You learn to develop your influence from wherever you are in the organization by becoming a 360Degree Leader. You learn to lead up, lead across, and lead down.

Not everyone understands what it means to influence others in every direction—those you work for, the people who are on the same level with you, and those who work for you. Some people are good at leading the members of their own team, but they seem to alienate the leaders in other departments of the organization. Other individuals excel at building a great relationship with their boss, but they have no influence with anyone below them in the organization. A few people can get along with just about anybody, but they never seem to get any work done. On the other hand, some people are productive, but they can't get along with anybody. But 360Degree Leaders are different. Only 360Degree Leaders influence people at every level of the organization. By helping others, they help themselves.

At this point, you may be saying, "Leading in every direction—that's easier said than done!" That's true, but it's not impossible. In fact, becoming a 360Degree Leader is within the reach of anyone who possesses average or better leadership skills and is willing to work at it. So even if you would rate yourself as only a five or six on a scale of one to ten, you can improve your leadership and develop influence with the people all around you in an organization—and you can do it from anywhere in the organization.

Leading in all directions will require you to learn three different sets of leadership skills. You may already possess an intuitive sense of how well you lead up, across, and down. I

want to help you make a more accurate assessment of those skills because it will help you to know how to direct your personal leadership growth. For that reason, I have arranged for purchasers of this book to be able to go to www.360DegreeLeader.com and take a free assessment of their 360Degree Leadership skills. What's offered is a simple, straightforward on-line questionnaire that will ask you to rate yourself on issues related to leadership in each of the three areas. The assessment will take only about fifteen minutes, and when you're done, you will be able to download a lengthy report with your results.

If you look on the reverse side of the dust jacket of this book, you will find a personal identification code that can be used to access the assessment. If you are reading a paperback, international version of this book, you'll find your code on the sticker inside the cover. Go to http://www.360DegreeLeader.com. Once there, follow the instructions and, when prompted, type in your personal identification code to take the test free of charge.

I recommend that you complete the assessment before reading the rest of the book. That way, you'll know where your strengths and weaknesses are as you learn about each skill set. However, before we get into those, we need to address other issues, starting with seven myths believed by many people who lead from the middle of organizations. That is the subject of this first section of the book.

Myth #1

THE POSITION MYTH:
"I can't lead if I am not at the top."

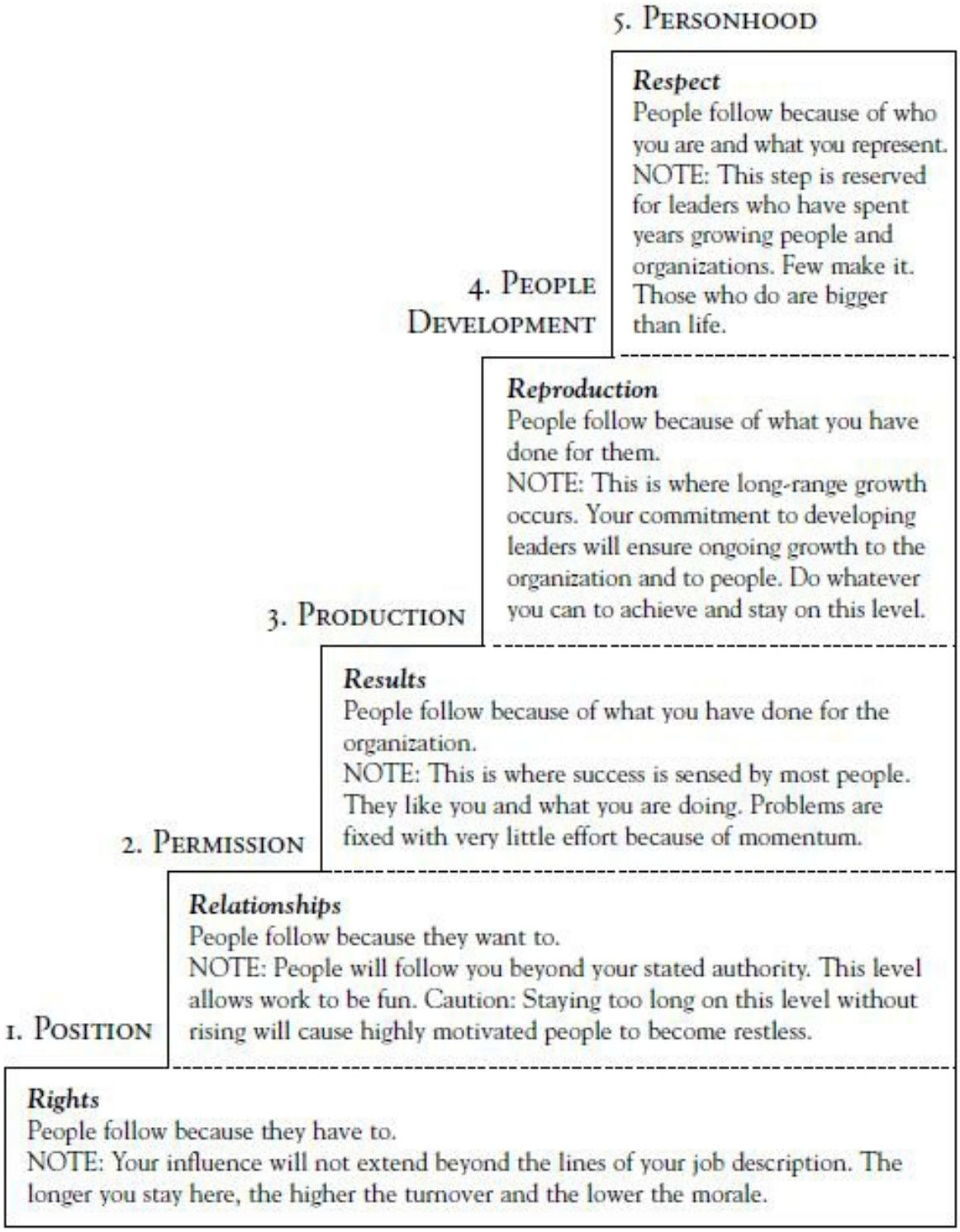
If I had to identify the number one misconception people have about leadership, it would be the belief that leadership comes simply from having a position or title. But nothing could be further from the truth. You don't need to possess a position at the top of your group, department, division, or organization in order to lead. If you think you do, then you have bought into the position myth.

A place at the top will not automatically make anyone a leader. The Law of Influence in *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* states it clearly: "The true measure of leadership is influence—nothing more, nothing less."

Because I have led volunteer organizations most of my life, I have watched many people become tied up by the position myth. When people who buy into this myth are identified as potential leaders and put on a team, they are very uncomfortable if they have not been given some kind of title or position that labels them as leaders in the eyes of other team members. Instead of working to build relationships with others on the team and to gain influence naturally, they wait for the positional leader to invest them with authority and give them a title. After a while, they become more and more unhappy, until they finally decide to try another team, another leader, or

another organization.

People who follow this pattern don't understand how effective leadership develops. If you've read some of my other leadership books, you might be aware of a leadership identification tool I call "The Five Levels of Leadership," which I introduce in *Developing the Leader Within You*. It captures the dynamics of leadership development as well as anything I know. Just in case you're not familiar with it, I'll explain it briefly here.


5. Personhood
Respect
People follow because of who you are and what you represent.
NOTE: This step is reserved for leaders who have spent years growing people and organizations. Few make it. Those who do are bigger than life.
4. People Development
Reproduction
People follow because of what you have done for them.
NOTE: This is where long-range growth occurs. Your commitment to developing leaders will ensure ongoing growth to the organization and to people. Do whatever you can to achieve and stay on this level.
3. Production
Results
People follow because of what you have done for the organization.
NOTE: This is where success is sensed by most people. They like you and what you are doing. Problems are fixed with very little effort because of momentum.
2. Permission
Relationships
People follow because they want to.
NOTE: People will follow you beyond your stated authority. This level allows work to be fun. Caution: Staying too long on this level without rising will cause highly motivated people to become restless.
1. Position
Rights
People follow because they have to.
NOTE: Your influence will not extend beyond the lines of your job description. The longer you stay here, the higher the turnover and the lower the morale.

Leadership is dynamic, and the right to lead must be earned

individually with each person you meet. Where you are on the "staircase of leadership" depends on your history with that person. And with everyone, we start at the bottom of the five steps or levels.

That bottom (or first) level is position. You can only start from the position you have been given, whatever it is: production-line worker, administrative assistant, salesperson, foreman, pastor, assistant manager, and so forth. Your position is whatever it is. From that place, you have certain rights that come with your title. But if you lead people using only your position, and you do nothing else to try to increase your influence, then people will follow you only because they have to. They will follow only within the boundaries of your job description. The lower your stated position, the less positional authority you possess. The good news is that you can increase your influence beyond your title and position. You can "move up" the staircase of leadership to higher levels.

If you move to level two, you begin to lead beyond your position because you have built relationships with the people you desire to lead. You treat them with dignity and respect. You value them as human beings. You care about them, not just the job they can do for you or the organization. Because you care about them, they begin to trust you more. As a result, they give you permission to lead them. In other words, they begin to follow you because they want to.

The third level is the production level. You move to this phase of leadership with others because of the results you achieve on the job. If the people you lead succeed in getting the job done because of your contribution to the team, then they will look to you more and more to lead the way. They

follow you because of what you've done for the organization.

To reach the fourth level of leadership, you must focus on developing others. Accordingly, this is called the people-development level of leadership. Your agenda is to pour yourself into the individuals you lead—mentor them, help them develop their skills, and sharpen their leadership ability. What you are doing, in essence, is leadership reproduction. You value them, add value to them, and make them more valuable. At this level, they follow you because of what you've done for them.

The fifth and final level is the personhood level, but it is not a level one can strive to reach, because reaching it is outside of your control. Only others can put you there, and they do so because you have excelled in leading them from the first four levels for a long period of time. You have earned the reputation of a level-five leader.

DISPOSITION MORE THAN POSITION

When potential leaders understand the dynamics of gaining influence with people using the Five Levels of Leadership, they come to realize that position has little to do with genuine leadership. Do individuals have to be at the top of the organizational chart to develop relationships with others and get them to like working with them? Do they need to possess the top title to achieve results and help others become productive? Do they have to be president or CEO to teach the people who report to them to see, think, and work like leaders? Of course not. Influencing others is a matter of disposition, not

position.

Leadership is a choice you make, not a place you sit.

You can lead others from anywhere in an organization. And when you do, you make the organization better. David Branker, a leader who has influenced others from the middle of organizations for years and who currently serves as an executive director in a large church, said, “To do nothing in the middle is to create more weight for the top leader to move. For some leaders—it might even feel like dead weight. Leaders in the middle can have a profound effect on an organization.”

Every level of an organization depends on leadership from someone. The bottom line is this: Leadership is a choice you make, not a place you sit. Anyone can choose to become a leader wherever he is. You can make a difference no matter where you are.

Myth #2

THE DESTINATION MYTH:
"When I get to the top, then I'll learn to lead."

In 2003, Charlie Wetzel, my writer, decided he wanted to tackle a goal he had held for more than a decade. He was determined to run a marathon. If you were to meet Charlie, you'd never guess that he is a runner. The articles in running magazines say that at five feet ten inches tall, a distance runner should weigh 165 pounds or less. Charlie weighs more like 205. But he was a regular runner who averaged twelve to twenty miles a week and ran two or three 10K races every year, so he picked the Chicago marathon and decided to go for it.

Do you think Charlie just showed up at the starting line in downtown Chicago on race day and said, "Okay, I guess it's time to figure out how to run a marathon"? Of course not. He started doing his homework a year in advance. He read reviews of marathons held around the United States and learned that the Chicago marathon—held in October—enjoys great weather most years. It utilizes a fast, flat race course. It has a reputation for having the best fan support of any marathon in the nation. It was the perfect place for a first-time marathoner.

He also started learning how to train for a marathon. He read articles. He searched Web sites. He talked to marathon runners. He even recruited a friend who had run two marathons to race

with him in Chicago on October 12. And, of course, he trained. He started the process in mid-April, increasing his mileage every week and eventually working his way up to two training runs of twenty miles each in addition to his other sessions. When race day came around, he was ready—and he completed the race.

Leadership is very similar. If you want to succeed, you need to learn as much as you can about leadership before you have a leadership position. When I meet people in social settings and they ask me what I do for a living, some of them are intrigued when I say I write books and speak. And they often ask what I write about. When I say leadership, the response that makes me chuckle most goes something like this: "Oh. Well, when I become a leader, I'll read some of your books!" What I don't say (but want to) is: "If you'd read some of my books, maybe you'd become a leader."

Good leadership is learned in the trenches. Leading as well as they can wherever they are is what prepares leaders for more and greater responsibility. Becoming a good leader is a lifelong learning process. If you don't try out your leadership skills and decision-making process when the stakes are small and the risks are low, you're likely to get into trouble at higher levels when the cost of mistakes is high, the impact is far reaching, and the exposure is greater. Mistakes made on a small scale can be easily overcome. Mistakes made when you're at the top cost the organization greatly, and they damage a leader's credibility.

How do you become the person you desire to be? You start now to adopt the thinking, learn the skills, and develop the habits of the person you wish to be. It's a mistake to daydream

about “one day when you’ll be on top” instead of handling today so that it prepares you for tomorrow. As Hall of Fame basketball coach John Wooden said, “When opportunity comes, it’s too late to prepare.” If you want to be a successful leader, learn to lead before you have a leadership position.

Myth #3

THE INFLUENCE MYTH:
"If I were on top, then people would follow me."

I once read that President Woodrow Wilson had a housekeeper who constantly lamented that she and her husband didn't possess more prestigious positions in life. One day the lady approached the president after she heard that the secretary of labor had resigned from the administration.

"President Wilson," she said, "my husband is perfect for his vacant position. He is a laboring man, knows what labor is, and understands laboring people. Please consider him when you appoint the new secretary of labor."

"I appreciate your recommendation," answered Wilson, "but you must remember, the secretary of labor is an important position. It requires an influential person."

"But," the housekeeper said, "if you made my husband the secretary of labor, he would be an influential person!"

People who have no leadership experience have a tendency to overestimate the importance of a leadership title. That was the case for President Wilson's housekeeper. She thought that leadership was a reward that someone of importance could grant. But influence doesn't work that way. You may be able to grant someone a position, but you cannot grant him real

leadership. Influence must be earned.

A position gives you a chance. It gives you the opportunity to try out your leadership. It asks people to give you the benefit of the doubt for a while. But given some time, you will earn your level of influence—for better or worse. Good leaders will gain in influence beyond their stated position. Bad leaders will shrink their influence down so that it is actually less than what originally came with the position. Remember, a position doesn't make a leader, but a leader can make the position.

You may be able to grant someone a position, but you cannot grant him real leadership. Influence must be earned.

Myth #4

THE INEXPERIENCE MYTH:
"When I get to the top, I'll be in control."

Have you ever found yourself saying something like, "You know, if I were in charge, we wouldn't have done this, and we wouldn't have done that. Things sure would be different around here if I were the boss"? If so, let me tell you that there's good news and bad news. The good news is that the desire to improve an organization and the belief that you're capable of doing it are often the marks of a leader. Andy Stanley said, "If you're a leader and leaders work for you, they think they can do a better job than you. They just do (just like you do). And that's not wrong; that's just leadership."[1] The desires to innovate, to improve, to create, and to find a better way are all leadership characteristics.

Now here's the bad news. Without experience being the top person in an organization, you would likely overestimate the amount of control you have at the top. The higher you go—and the larger the organization—the more you realize that many factors control the organization. More than ever, when you are at the top, you need every bit of influence you can muster. Your position does not give you total control—or protect you.

As I write this, a story has broken in the business news that provides a good illustration of this fact. Perhaps you are

familiar with the name Carly Fiorina. She is considered one of the top business executives in the nation, and in 1998, *Fortune* magazine named her the most powerful woman executive in the United States. At that time she was the president of Lucent Technologies' Global Service Provider Business, but soon afterward she became CEO of Hewlett-Packard, the eleventh largest company in the nation at the time.[2]

In 2002, Fiorina made a bold move that she hoped would pay off big for her organization. She orchestrated a merger of Hewlett-Packard and Compaq in an effort to become more competitive with chief rival Dell. Unfortunately, revenues and earnings didn't meet expectations during the two years after the merger, but even as late as December of 2004, Fiorina was upbeat about her future. When asked about the rumor that she might transition her career into politics, she responded, "I am the CEO of Hewlett-Packard. I love the company. I love the job—and I'm not finished."[3] Two months later she was finished. Hewlett-Packard's board of directors asked for her resignation.

To think that life "at the top" is easier is to think the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. Being at the top has its own set of problems and challenges. In leadership—no matter where you are in an organization—the bottom line is always influence.

Myth #5

THE FREEDOM MYTH:
"When I get to the top, I'll no longer be limited."

Sometimes I think people get the wrong idea about leadership. Many people hope that it's a ticket to freedom. It will provide a solution to their professional and career problems. But being at the top is not a cure-all.

Have you entertained the idea that being in charge will change your life? Have thoughts such as these come to mind from time to time?

When I get to the top, I'll have it made.
When I finally finish climbing the corporate ladder, I'll have time to rest.
When I own the company, I'll be able to do whatever I want.
When I'm in charge, the sky will be the limit.

Anybody who has owned a company or been the top leader in an organization knows that those ideas are little more than fantasies. Being the top leader doesn't mean you have no limits. It doesn't remove the lid from your potential. It doesn't matter what job you do or what position you obtain; you will

have limits. That's just the way life is.

When you move up in an organization, the weight of your responsibility increases. In many organizations, as you move up the ladder, you may even find that the amount of responsibility you take on increases faster than the amount of authority you receive. When you go higher, more is expected of you, the pressure is greater, and the impact of your decisions weighs more heavily. You must take these things into account.

To see how this can play out, let's say, for example, that you have a position in sales, and you're really good at it. You make sales, work well with clients, and bring $5 million in revenue for your company every year. As a salesperson, you may have a lot of freedom. Maybe you can work your schedule however you want. As many salespeople do, you may work from home. It doesn't matter if you want to work at 5 a.m. or 10 p.m., as long as you serve your clients and company well. You can do things in your own style, and if you drop a ball, you can probably recover pretty easily.

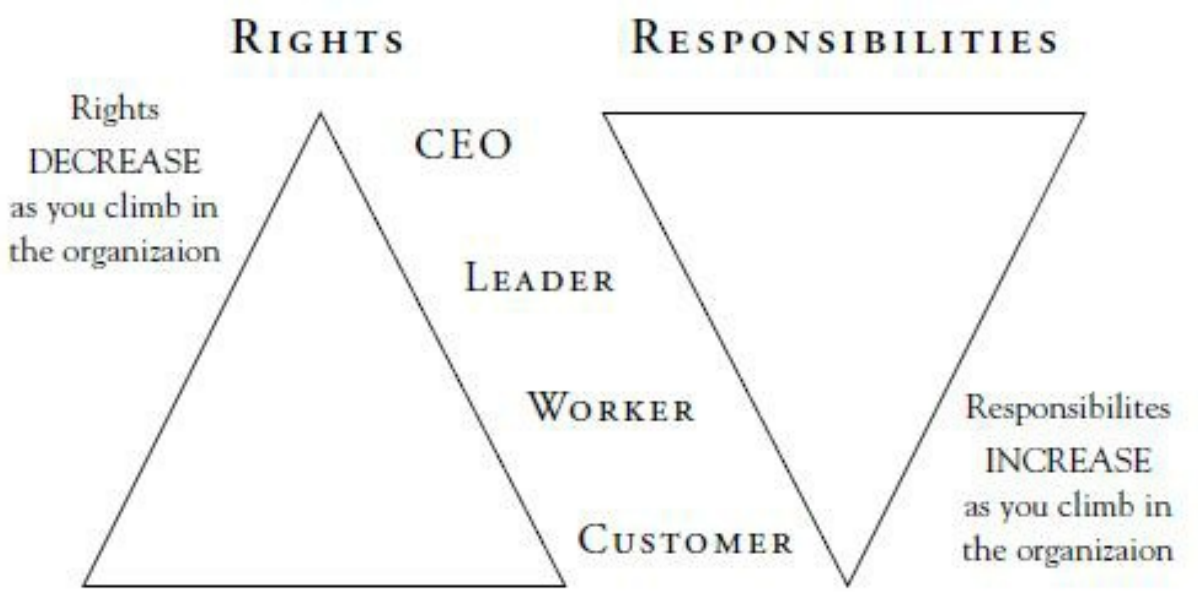
In many organizations, as you move up the ladder, you may even find that the amount of responsibility you take on increases faster than the amount of authority you receive.

But let's say you become a sales manager over half a dozen people who do what you used to do. You are now more limited than you were before. You can't arrange your schedule however you want anymore because you have to work around the schedules of your six employees, who have to work with

their clients. And if you're a good leader, you will encourage the members of your team to work using their own style to maximize their potential, making it that much more difficult for you. Add to that the increased financial pressures that the position brings since you would be responsible for maybe $25 million in revenue for your company.

If you move up again, let's say to the level of a division manager, then the demands on you increase yet again. And you may now have to work with a number of different departments, each with its own problems, skill sets, and cultures. Good leaders go to their people, connect, find common ground, and empower them to succeed. So in some ways, leaders have less freedom as they move up, not more.

When I teach leadership, I often use the following diagram to help potential leaders realize that as they rise up in the organization, their rights actually decrease instead of increase:



Customers have great freedom and can do almost anything they want. They have no real responsibility to the organization. Workers have more obligations. Leaders have even more, and because of that, they become more limited in terms of their freedom. It is a limitation they choose willingly, but they are limited just the same. If you want to push the limits of your effectiveness, there is a better solution. Learning to lead will blow the lid off of your potential.

Myth #6

THE POTENTIAL MYTH:
"I can't reach my potential if I'm not the top leader."

How many kids say, "Someday I want to grow up to be vice president of the United States"? Probably none. If a child has political aspirations, he wants to be president. If she has a bent toward business, she wants to be a company owner or CEO. Few people aspire to reach the middle. In fact, several years ago, Monster.com, an online job search service, poked fun at this idea by running a television ad showing children saying things such as, "When I grow up, I want to file all day long" and, "I want to claw my way up to middle management."

I believe that people should strive for the top of their game, not the top of the organization.

Yet the reality is that most people will never be the top leader in an organization. They will spend their careers somewhere in the middle. Is that okay? Or should everybody play career "king of the hill" and try to reach the top?

I believe that people should strive for the top of their game, not the top of the organization. Each of us should work to reach our potential, not necessarily the corner office.

Sometimes you can make the greatest impact from somewhere other than first place. An excellent example of that is Vice President Dick Cheney. He has enjoyed a remarkable career in politics: White House chief of staff to President Gerald Ford, six-term congressman from Wyoming, secretary of defense to President George H. W. Bush, and vice president to the second President Bush. He possesses all the credentials one would need to run for president of the United States. Yet he knows that the top position is not his best role. An article in *Time* magazine described Cheney this way:

> When Richard Bruce Cheney was a student at Natrona County High School in Casper, Wyo., he was a solid football player, senior-class president and an above-average student. But he wasn't the star . . . Inconspicuous, off to the side, backing up a flashier partner, putting out fires when called upon—it's a role Dick Cheney has played his entire life. Throughout his remarkable career . . . Cheney's success has derived from his unparalleled skill at serving as the discreet, effective, loyal adviser to higher-profile leaders. He did once flirt with the idea of twirling the flaming baton himself, considering a 1996 run for president. But the idea of putting himself on that stage . . . would have required a rewiring of Cheney's political DNA. Instead he took an offer in business, figuring he would retire in the job and then do a lot of hunting and fishing. But George W. Bush had a different plan, one that returned Cheney to the role he plays best. As Lynne Cheney told *Time*, her husband "never thought that this would be his job. But if you look back over his whole career, it's been preparation for this."[1]

Cheney has reached his potential in the position of vice president, a position few would set as a lifetime career goal. He is highly effective, and he seems to be content. Mary Kay Hill, a longtime aide to former Wyoming senator Alan Simpson, who worked with Cheney on Capitol Hill, said, "You plug him in,

and he works anywhere. He just has a real good way of fitting in and working his environment." Cheney appears to be an excellent example of a 360-Degree Leader, someone who knows how to influence others from whatever position he finds himself in.

Myth #7

THE ALL-OR-NOTHING MYTH:
"If I can't get to the top, then I won't try to lead."

What are the prospects for your getting to the top of your organization, of someday becoming *the* leader? The reality for most people is that they will never be the CEO. Does that mean they should just give up leading altogether?

That's what some people do. They look at an organization, recognize they will not be able to make it to the top, and give up. Their attitude is, "If I can't be the captain of the team, then I'll take my ball and go home."

Others enter the process of leadership but then become frustrated by their position in an organization. Why? Because they define *success* as being "on top." As a result, they believe that if they are not on top, they are not successful. If that frustration lasts long enough, they can become disillusioned, bitter, and cynical. If it gets to that point, instead of being a help to themselves and their organization, they become a hindrance.

But what good can people do if they sit on the sidelines?

Consider the case of six men who were featured in *Fortune* magazine in August of 2005. In the article, they are hailed as unsung heroes of the civil rights movement, yet there is no

evidence that they ever marched or sat in at a lunch counter. Their contributions—and their battles—occurred in corporate America. They led their way into the executive suite of companies such as Exxon, Phillip Morris, Marriott, and General Foods.

Clifton Wharton, who became the first black CEO of a large company (TIAA-CREF) says, "Gordon Parks has this great expression, 'choice of weapons.' In terms of fighting, you always have a choice of weapons. Some of us chose to do our fighting on the inside."[1]

When Wharton and fellow pioneers Darwin Davis, James Avery, Lee Archer, James "Bud" Ward, and George Lewis entered corporate America in the 1950s and '60s, what chance did they think they had to become CEO of their organizations: Equitable, Exxon, General Foods, Marriott, and Phillip Morris? Not much! When Avery started with Esso (now Exxon), he couldn't even use the same restroom or water fountain as other citizens. Yet it was his goal to lead. That desire was part of his first career choice: teaching. And it prompted him to change careers in 1956 when an Esso executive approached him.

"I loved being a teacher," Avery says. "But if I could wear a shirt and tie and work for a major corporation? Doing that was much more important."[2] Avery succeeded as a leader despite incredible obstacles and prejudice, and rose to the post of senior vice president. He retired in 1986.

Bud Ward, who retired as senior vice president at Marriott, has a similar story. When he was hired by Bill Marriott, Ward became the hotel industry's first black vice president. During his twenty years of leadership at Marriott, he opened 350

hotels, helped to develop the Courtyard by Marriott chain, and oversaw the company's infotech team.

Ward is aware of the impact he made. "It was a two-pronged thing," he says. "You do the marching and the raising hell and whatnot, but you've got to have somebody on the inside to interpret that to the individuals that you're trying to reach. I saw that as my role."[3]

What these men—and many others—did has made a lasting impact. In the same issue of *Fortune* was a special section called "The Diversity List." It profiled the most influential African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans in the country. Most people on the list are CEOs, presidents, chairmen, or founders of their organizations, positions that it would have been more difficult to attain had others not gone before them and led well.

You do not need to be the top dog to make a difference. Leadership is not meant to be an all-or-nothing proposition. If being someplace other than the top has caused you great frustration, please don't throw in the towel. Why? Because you can make an impact from wherever you are in an organization, even if you face additional obstacles, as these six men did.

Being a leader stuck in the middle brings many challenges. You can learn to navigate them. Becoming an effective 360-Degree Leader requires principles and skills to lead the people above, beside, and below you in the organization. You can learn them.

I believe that individuals can become better leaders wherever they are. Improve your leadership, and you can impact your

organization. You can change people's lives. You can be someone who adds value. You can learn to influence people at every level of the organization—even if you never get to the top. By helping others, you can help yourself.

The first place to start is by learning to overcome the challenges that every 360-Degree Leader faces. So turn the page and let's get started.

Section I Review
The Myths of Leading from the Middle of an Organization

Here is a brief review of the 7 Myths every leader in the middle faces:

MYTH #1	The Position Myth: "I can't lead if I am not at the top."
MYTH #2	The Destination Myth: "When I get to the top, then I'll learn to le
MYTH #3	The Influence Myth: "If I were on top, then people would follow n
MYTH #4	The Inexperience Myth: "When I get to the top, I'll be in control.'
MYTH #5	The Freedom Myth: "When I get to the top, I'll no longer be limi
MYTH #6	The Potential Myth: "I can't reach my potential if I'm not the top leader."
MYTH #7	The All-or-Nothing Myth: "If I can't get to the top, then I won't tr lead."

How well are you doing overcoming these seven myths? If you're not sure, take the 360Degree Leadership assessment offered free of charge to people who have purchased this book. Visit 360DegreeLeader.com for more information.

SECTION II

THE CHALLENGES 360-DEGREE LEADERS FACE

If you are a leader in the middle of an organization, you don't need me to tell you that you have a challenging job. Many of the middle leaders I meet are frustrated, tense, and sometimes tempted to quit. I hear them say things such as, "It's like banging my head against a brick wall." "No matter how hard I try, I never seem to get anywhere." "I really wonder if it's all worth it."

If you and I were to sit down and talk for a few minutes, I bet you could list at least half a dozen problems you face because you are trying to lead from the middle. Perhaps you even feel you have been struggling to succeed where you are. But did you know that the things that frustrate you also frustrate nearly every other middle leader? Everyone who attempts to lead from the middle of the organization faces common challenges. You are not alone.

As I've mentioned, the best opportunity for helping yourself —and your organization—is to become a 360-Degree Leader. However, before you dive into the principles that 360-Degree Leaders practice to lead up, across, and down, I think you ought to acquaint yourself with the seven most common challenges that leaders in the middle face. Defining and recognizing them will help you to navigate the world of the

middle, where you are trying to be a good leader even though you are not *the* leader.

I believe the challenges will resonate with you, and you will find yourself saying, “Right on.” And, of course, I’ve offered some suggestions to help you, since recognizing the challenges is of little value without solutions. Read on so that you can resolve some of these issues and get ready to lead 360 degrees.

Challenge #1

THE TENSION CHALLENGE:
The Pressure of Being Caught in the Middle

THE KEY TO SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING THE TENSION CHALLENGE:

Learn to lead despite the restrictions others have placed on you.

One of the toughest things about being a leader in the middle of an organization is that you can't be sure of where you stand. As a leader, you have some power and authority. You can make some decisions. You have access to some resources. You can call the people in your area to action and direct them in their work. At the same time, you also lack power in other areas. And if you overstep your authority, you can get yourself into real trouble.

My friend and colleague Dan Reiland calls this "the pressure of feeling like you have all power and no power." If you are not the top leader, you are not running the show, but you may be responsible for it. Even if you think you possess the vision and skill to take the organization to a higher level, if it requires the

organization to go in a different direction from its present course, you don't have the authority to make such changes on your own. And that can make you feel like you are caught in the middle.

As a leader in the middle of an organization, the authority you do possess is not your own. Unless you are the owner and CEO of the company, the power you have is on loan from someone with higher authority. And that person has the power to take that authority away from you by firing you, demoting you, or moving you to another area of the business. If that does not create tension, nothing will.

FACTORS THAT IMPACT THE TENSION

The effects of the Tension Challenge are not experienced equally by everyone trying to lead from the middle of an organization. A leader's temperament and ability certainly come into play. In addition, the way the tension impacts a leader is affected by the following five factors:

1. EMPOWERMENT—HOW MUCH AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY DOES THE PERSON ABOVE YOU GIVE YOU, AND HOW CLEAR ARE THE LINES?

In his book *It's Your Ship* , former navy Captain D. Michael Abrashoff recounted how he turned around the performance of the crew of the U.S.S. *Benfold* using empowerment.

> When I took command of *Benfold*, I realized that no one, including me,

> is capable of making every decision. I would have to train my people to think and make judgments on their own. Empowering means defining the parameters in which people are allowed to operate, and then setting them free.
>
> But how free was free? What were the limits?
>
> I chose my line in the sand. Whenever the consequences of a decision had the potential to kill or injure someone, waste taxpayers' money, or damage the ship, I had to be consulted. Short of those contingencies, the crew was authorized to make their own decisions. Even if the decisions were wrong, I would stand by my crew. Hopefully, they would learn from their mistakes. And the more responsibility they were given, the more they learned.[1]

Not everyone experiences the kind of freedom to succeed—and safely fail—that Abrashoff's crew did. How clearly the lines of authority and responsibility have been drawn greatly impacts how strongly we feel the Tension Challenge. The more vaguely the lines are drawn, the greater the potential for stress.

If you've led a volunteer organization, as I have, then you may have observed that high-powered leaders and entrepreneurs often experience the Tension Challenge when they step out of their business world and volunteer. As top leaders, they are used to their authority being equal to their responsibility. They are used to casting vision, setting direction, and making things happen. When they volunteer to serve in an organization, they no longer possess all the authority, and they find themselves in the gray area of the middle. Many are not sure how to navigate in that environment. (That's especially true when they are better at leading than is the person running the volunteer organization.) Many of these business leaders respond by either trying to take over or going off in their own direction. Others simply give

up and return to the world they know best.

Good leaders rarely think in terms of boundaries; instead, they think in terms of opportunities.

2. INITIATIVE—HOW DO YOU BALANCE INITIATING AND NOT OVERSTEPPING YOUR BOUNDARIES?

Good leaders rarely think in terms of boundaries; instead, they think in terms of opportunities. They are initiators. After all, the number one characteristic of leaders is the ability to make things happen. Sometimes that desire to initiate leads to the expansion of their responsibilities—and their boundaries. Other times it leads to conflict with the people who lead them.

You need to realize that the stronger your natural desire to initiate, the greater the potential for tension. If you continually push the limits, it's likely you will rub others the wrong way. The good news is that if you work in an environment where leaders at all levels are empowered, people may tolerate your challenging the process of how things get done. If you challenge the vision or the authority of your leaders, however, you may go from being caught in the middle to being on the outside, looking for another job.

3. ENVIRONMENT—WHAT IS THE LEADERSHIP DNA OF THE ORGANIZATION AND LEADER?

Every organization has its own unique environment. If you have a military background, you can't walk into a corporate

environment and expect it to function like the army or marines. If your experience is in large corporations, and you go to work in a mom-and-pop business, you will have problems if you don't adapt. That's just common sense.

Likewise, an organization takes on the personality of its leader. The leadership DNA of the *Benfold* changed during the course of Abrashoff's command. He wanted to create an environment of empowerment where initiative and ownership were valued. People who demonstrated those characteristics were rewarded. And as long as Abrashoff was in command, the ship's environment exhibited those characteristics.

If you are a leader in the middle of an organization, assess your environment. Is it one that increases or decreases the Tension Challenge? Can you thrive in the kind of environment you're in with the level of tension it presents? Do the positive aspects of the organization outweigh the negative effects of the environment on you? An environment may be fine for one leader but not for another. Only you can make the assessment for yourself.

4. JOB PARAMETERS—HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR JOB AND HOW TO DO IT?

Have you ever noticed the level of tension you experience when starting a new job? It's pretty high, isn't it? The less familiar the work, the greater the tension. If you don't know how to do the job, you're going to be stressed, even if you're a fast learner and have a teachable attitude. Even after you know how to do the work, if you have no idea what others' expectations are of you, you won't be on solid ground. Only

when you really have a handle on your job and you are good at your work does it reduce the tension of being in the middle.

5. Appreciation—Can you live without the credit?

Someone once said, "What's causing so much disharmony among the nations is the fact that some want to beat the big drum, few are willing to face the music, and none will play second fiddle." The reality of leading from the middle of an organization is that you are not going to get as much public recognition and appreciation as leaders at the top. That's just the way it is. The greater your desire to receive credit and recognition, the more frustrated you are likely to become working in the middle of an organization. You need to decide for yourself if you receive enough satisfaction to keep you going where you are.

How to Relieve the Tension Challenge

It's not enough to merely recognize that leading from somewhere in the middle of an organization can be stressful. It's not good enough to simply survive. You want to thrive, and to do that, you need to learn how to relieve the tension. Here are five suggestions:

1. Become Comfortable with the Middle

We often think leadership is easier at the top. The reality is

that it's actually easier to lead from the middle—if a really good leader is above you. Good leaders at the top break ground for their people. They create momentum for the entire organization. Haven't you seen average or even below-average leaders succeed because they were part of an organization that was led well overall? Haven't you seen colleagues overachieve because their leader made them better than they were on their own?

When you have excellent leaders, you don't need as much skill and energy to make things happen. You benefit from everything they do. So why not enjoy it—and learn from them too? I've long admired the following poem by Helen Laurie:

How often I've been put to the test
To make the best of second-best,
Only to wake one day and see
That second-best is best for me.

Being in the middle can be a great place—as long as you have bought into the vision and believe in the leader.

So how do you get comfortable with the middle? Comfort is really a function of expectations. The wider the gap between what you imagine to be and reality, the more disappointed you are likely to be. Talk things out with your boss. The more you know about what's expected of you, what's normal in the organization, and how much authority you have, the more comfortable you will be.

Comfort is really a function of expectations.

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2. KNOW WHAT TO "OWN" AND WHAT TO LET GO

Nothing frees a person from tension like clear lines of responsibility. When I became the senior pastor at Skyline Church in California in 1981, even before my first day, I found out what I had to own personally. (Even leaders at the top can still be in the middle—the board was my boss.) I asked the members of the board to give me their short list of things I had to do that no one else could do for me. There were four things on that list:

- *Take final responsibility.* The buck stopped with me. I answered for whatever happened in the church.
- *Be the main communicator.* I needed to determine what was communicated during the services, and I needed to be in the pulpit most Sundays.
- *Be the main representative of the church.* I was to be the primary face and voice for the church, within the congregation, and to the community.
- *Live a life of integrity.* Author and entrepreneur Byrd Baggett defines *integrity* as "doing what you said you would do, when you said you would do it, and how you said you would do it." Nothing is more important in the life of a leader who desires to represent God to others.

One of the best things you can do is ask what is expected of you, and then maintain a dialogue concerning expectations with the people to whom you answer. Todd Mullins, who

works on staff for his father, Tom Mullins, at Christ Fellowship in West Palm Beach, Florida, often found that ongoing communication helped them to resolve this tension in their somewhat fluid environment. Tom does a lot of speaking around the country, and when he would come back to the church, he would want to step back into leadership in some areas where others had been leading. Todd learned to ask, "Is this mine or yours?" (And by the way, in cases like this, it is the responsibility of the staff to communicate with their leader.) That made it possible either for Todd to step back as Tom stepped in, or for Tom to be gracefully reminded not to make a mess in an area where he didn't really want to lead.

3. Find Quick Access to Answers When Caught in the Middle

I can think of few people who get caught in the middle more than executive assistants. They experience the Tension Challenge to a high degree every day. I know that's true for my own assistant, Linda Eggers. The people she interacts with on my behalf are very demanding. And for that matter, so am I. One of the best ways I can help Linda is to get information to her as quickly as possible. If she asks me a question, I try to give her an answer right then. When I am traveling and we haven't spoken in twenty-four hours, I call her. She always has a list of questions to ask and issues to discuss. If I don't keep her waiting, she can do her work much more effectively.

Everybody needs to find a way to get quick answers in order to succeed when caught in the middle. Sometimes that can be

difficult, especially if the people you work for are not communicative. In such cases, you need to find others who can help you. That may take time. And it will require that you have good rapport with the people around you. As you develop the skill of 360-Degree Leadership, it will become that much easier for you.

4. Never Violate Your Position or the Trust of the Leader

If you want to know what will increase the Tension Challenge to the breaking point, it's violating the trust given to you with your authority or position. That can mean abusing the power of your position, intentionally undermining your leader, or using the organization's resources for personal gain. David Branker, executive director of a large organization in Jacksonville, Florida, said, "Trust is built one block at a time, but when it is violated, the entire wall comes crashing down. When you have been empowered with authority you exercise that on behalf of those you report to. It's never to serve your own interest. Over the course of your leadership journey your character and integrity will invariably be tested."

"Trust is built one block at a time, but when it is violated the entire wall comes crashing down."
—David Branker

As someone leading from the middle of an organization, your ability to sustain the authority that has been invested in you is entirely dependent upon your faithfulness in serving the

people who gave you that authority. Accordingly, you must guard against the temptation to try to advance at the expense of your leader. And it would be wise not to allow yourself to have an "if I were in charge" conversation with another staff member. If you have difficulties with your leaders, talk to them about it.

5. Find a Way to Relieve Stress

You will never completely eliminate the stress of the Tension Challenge, so you need to find a way to relieve it. Rod Loy, who leads a large organization in Little Rock, Arkansas, says that when he was a leader in the middle of an organization, he kept a file called "Things I will never do to my team when I become the top leader." As a leader in the middle, he knew that his natural temptation would be to let off steam with his coworkers. He short-circuited that tendency to vent his frustrations to others by simply writing down his observations and putting them in a file. It cleared the air for him, prevented him from violating his leader's trust, and ensured that he would remember the lesson of any mistakes made by his leader.

That kind of thing may work for you. If not, find something else: hit golf balls, jog, take up kickboxing, do aerobics, take a walk, get a massage—it doesn't matter what, as long as it is a good, healthy outlet for when the stress of the Tension Challenge gets to be too much for you.

Nobody said becoming a 360-Degree Leader would be easy. Leading from the middle of an organization is stressful, but so is being the top leader. And so is being a worker who has no say in how his job should be done. The key to succeeding is to

learn to deal with the tension of whatever position you are in, overcome its obstacles, and make the most of its advantages and opportunities. If you do that, you can succeed from anywhere in the organization.

Challenge #2

THE FRUSTRATION CHALLENGE:
Following an Ineffective Leader

THE KEY TO SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING THE FRUSTRATION CHALLENGE:

Your job isn't to fix the leader;
it's to add value. If the leader
won't change, then change your
attitude or your work address.

On February 6, 1865, the Congress of Confederate States of America, the government of states that had been battling to secede from the United States for nearly four years, did something that Robert E. Lee had hoped to prevent. It adopted a resolution making him general-in-chief—leader of all the nation's armies, not just the Army of Northern Virginia.

Why would the Southern leaders do such a thing? Because they could see that Lee, a great military leader, was following an ineffective leader—their president, Jefferson Davis—and they still hoped to win their independence from the United States in what they thought of as the second American

Revolution.

Most people agree that Lee was the most talented military leader on either side during the American Civil War. In fact, as the Southern states seceded, President Lincoln offered Robert E. Lee command of all Union forces in the field. But Lee declined Lincoln's offer. His loyalty was to his home state of Virginia. He chose to fight for the Confederacy. Lee, a West Point graduate and experienced army officer, quickly distinguished himself on the battlefield and soon became commander of the Army of Northern Virginia.

As the war continued, leaders within the Confederate States of America became restless because of their lack of victory. Jefferson Davis, they found, did not have the leadership skills required to win the war, despite his credentials—a West Point education, respected military service, experience as a U.S. representative, senator, and secretary of defense. Many Confederate leaders wanted to make Lee commander-in-chief, a move that would have usurped Davis's authority and stripped him of power over the military. But Lee would not allow it. He was loyal to his state, his cause, and his leader. He worked within the hierarchy. So finally, in desperation, the Confederate congress did what they could—they made Lee general-in-chief, hoping it would change the South's fate.

It was obvious to many good leaders that Lee was being asked to follow someone who could not lead as well as he could. Even Lee's opponents, including General and later President Ulysses S. Grant, observed it. Grant remarked in his memoirs: "The Confederacy had gone a long way beyond the reach of President Davis, and there was nothing that could be done except what Lee could do to benefit the Southern

people." Lee felt it was a point of honor not to overstep his bounds. That is one of the reasons the Confederates lost the war and the Union was preserved. Lee was faithful and respective, but there is no telling how differently things might have turned out if Lee had developed the ability to lead up!

LEADERS NO ONE WANTS TO FOLLOW

Few things can be more maddening to a good leader in the middle of an organization than working for an ineffective leader. I have not read anything indicating how Robert E. Lee felt about following Jefferson Davis. He was probably too much of a gentleman to express any negative feelings publicly. But I know it must have been frustrating.

There are many different kinds of ineffective leaders, all of whom are frustrating to follow. Here are a few particularly difficult examples:

THE INSECURE LEADER

Insecure leaders think everything is about them, and as a result, every action, every piece of information, every decision is put through their filter of self-centeredness. When someone on their team performs exceptionally well, they fear being outshone, and they often try to keep him from rising up. When someone on their team does poorly, they react in anger because it makes them look bad.

Insecure leaders think everything is about them, and as a result, every action, every piece of information, every

decision is put through their filter of self-centeredness.

More than anything else, insecure leaders desire the status quo—for everyone but themselves. They are like the company president who is reported to have sent a memo to the personnel manager with the following message: "Search the organization for alert, aggressive young leaders capable of stepping into my shoes. And when you find them—fire them!"

One friend I talked to while writing this book said that he once worked for a leader who had one basic leadership principle: keep everyone off balance. If someone working for him started feeling a little too secure, he would "shake him up."

In an organization, security flows downward. When leaders are insecure, they often project that insecurity down to the people below them. If you work for an insecure person, not only will you have to work to deflect that individual's insecurity from yourself, but you will also have to work harder to "break the chain" and create security for the people who work for you. If you don't, the people under your care will suffer.

THE VISIONLESS LEADER

Leaders who lack vision create two immediate problems for the people who work for them. First, they fail to provide direction or incentive to move forward. The ancient Proverbs author wrote, "Where there is no vision, the people perish."[1] Why? Because they don't go anywhere or do anything. And that's no way to live. Second, people who lack vision almost

always lack passion. They have no fire—and no fuel to keep themselves and their people going. That doesn't create the kind of positive environment that is exciting to work in.

The good news is that if you have vision when your leader does not, you can rely on your vision to create an environment of productivity and success for the people working within your area of responsibility. The bad news is that other people with a different vision—even a destructive one—may try to rush in and fill the void created by your leader. You must beware of the conflict that can create.

THE INCOMPETENT LEADER

Several years ago while traveling in Turkey, I listened as a tour guide talked about many of the sultans in Turkey's history and how they put their people under tremendous pressure. Often if someone didn't meet their expectations, the sultans would simply put the person to death.

The guide spoke about the sultan who had ordered the construction of the Blue Mosque in Istanbul. The sultan wanted the architect to make the building's minarets out of gold. The problem was that the architect knew there wasn't enough money to do that. The architect also knew that if he disagreed with the sultan, it might cost him his head. It was quite a dilemma, but the architect came up with a clever solution. The word for *six* was very similar to the word for *gold* in Arabic, *alti* versus *altin*. So the architect built six towers made of stone, and when the sultan questioned him, the architect feigned misunderstanding and explained that he thought the sultan had said *alti*, not *altin*.

"Advice is seldom welcome, and those who need it most like it the least."
—SAMUEL JOHNSON

Leaders who follow incompetent people often feel the pressure that the architect in the story did—though they usually don't face such potentially dire consequences. Incompetent leaders are ineffective, and they often stay that way. Poet and critic Samuel Johnson said, "Advice is seldom welcome, and those who need it most like it the least."

Incompetent leaders are trouble, not only for the people they lead, but also for their entire organization. They are "lids" on the parts of the organization they lead. The Law of the Lid states in *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership,* "Leadership ability determines a person's level of effectiveness."

THE SELFISH LEADER

In *The Circle of Innovation*, author and business guru Tom Peters writes:

> The selfish leader will attempt to lead others for their own gain and for the detriment of others. These people believe that life is a point driven, zero-sum game, with winners and losers. They encourage others to be losers in the game of life so that they can collect all the spoils for themselves. This is the businesswoman who cheats suppliers in order to make her department look good in hopes of getting a raise. This is the father who selfishly motivates his son to excel in sports so that he might gain vicarious pleasure at his son's expense.[2]

A selfish leader advances at the expense of everyone around

him or her. An executive I interviewed said that one of the leaders he worked for earlier in his career was someone who selfishly hoarded all the perks that came with his leadership position. As a result, now that the executive is a top leader himself, he makes it a point to share the perks of leadership with the people who work for him. That's good advice for anyone in a leadership position anywhere in an organization. Share whatever you have with the people below you. Legendary basketball coach John Wooden said that to be successful "you must be interested in finding the best way, not in having your own way."

"The selfish leader will attempt to lead others for their own gain and for the detriment of others."
—TOM PETERS

THE CHAMELEON LEADER

President Lyndon Baines Johnson used to tell the story of a young, unemployed schoolteacher who came to the Texas hill country during the Depression in search of a job. When the local school board asked him whether the world was round or flat, the would-be teacher panicked, fearing a trap, and blurted out, "I can teach it both ways!"

That's the chameleon leader's reaction when you try to pin him down. When people follow a chameleon leader, they never know how he will react. As a result, valuable time and energy that could be used getting work done is often wasted in trying to predict and anticipate the leader's next move.

THE POLITICAL LEADER

Similar to the chameleon leader are political leaders. They can be just as difficult to pin down, but where emotional issues often fuel the chameleon leader's problems, political leaders are motivated by the desire to get ahead. It's hard to follow people whose decisions are based on political ambitions rather than the mission or the good of the organization. They are like the mayor who was asked where he stood on a particular issue. He answered, "Well, some of my friends are for it. Some are against it. As for me, I'm for my friends."

THE CONTROLLING LEADER

Have you ever worked for someone who wants to be in the middle of everything you do? Few things are more frustrating for a competent person. And few things are more irritating for a good leader. It's difficult to generate momentum when the person you work for is continually interrupting your progress by micromanaging you.

People who micromanage others are often driven by one of two things: the desire for perfection, which is unobtainable, or the belief that no one can do a job as well as they can, which really boils down to their thinking others' contributions aren't as valuable as their own. Neither makes for positive working conditions for the people answering to them.

THE SOLUTION TO THE FRUSTRATION CHALLENGE: ADDING VALUE

A normal reaction to the Frustration Challenge is to fix or replace the leader you're working for, but that is usually not an option for leaders in the middle of the pack. Besides, even if it were, it would be inappropriate. No matter what our circumstances, our greatest limitation isn't the leader above us—it's the spirit within us. Remember, your leadership is as much disposition as position. The role of leaders in the middle of an organization—in nearly every circumstance—is to add value to the organization and to the leader. The only time that is not true is when the leader above you is unethical or criminal.

No matter what our circumstances, our greatest limitation isn't the leader above us—it's the spirit within us.

What should you do when you find yourself following a leader who is ineffective? How do you add value in such circumstances? Most good leaders have had to ask themselves those questions at some time in their lives. In fact, the stronger you are as a leader, the more likely you are to face a situation where you can lead more effectively than the person to whom you report.

It may not be easy, but it is possible to survive—and even flourish—in a situation like this. Here is what I recommend:

1. Develop a Solid Relationship with Your Leader

The first reaction to working for an ineffective leader is often

to withdraw from him or her and build relational barriers. Fight that urge. If you make your leader your adversary, you will create a no-win situation. Instead, build a relational bridge. Try to get to know him, find common ground, and build a solid professional relationship. And in that process, reaffirm your commitment to the mission of the organization. Doing those things will put you on the same team.

2. Identify and Appreciate Your Leader's Strengths

Everybody has strengths—even an ineffective leader. Work to find them in the person you work for. Maybe it won't be easy. Maybe his strengths aren't qualities you value or admire. That doesn't matter. Find them, and then think about how they might be assets to the organization.

3. Commit Yourself to Adding Value to Your Leader's Strengths

The pathway to success in your career lies in maximizing your strengths. That is also true for your leader. Once you have discerned what your leader's strengths are and how those characteristics can be an asset to the organization, look for ways to help leverage those strengths.

4. Get Permission to Develop a Game Plan to Complement Your Leader's Weaknesses

Besides leveraging your strengths, one of the other secrets to job success is to staff your weaknesses. As a leader, you would be wise to empower some people who work for you to fill in your talent gaps. For example, if you are not good at details, then hire someone who is and have them work closely with you.

You can play that same gap-filling role with your leader. You must be very careful, however, in the way you approach this subject. Don't offer your opinion on her weaknesses unless she asks, and even then, be tactful. If she identifies one of her weaknesses to you, privately ask if she would be willing to let you carry the ball in that area. The idea is to do what she can't do so that she can do what she does best.

5. Expose Your Leader to Good Leadership Resources

If you are working to improve your leadership skills, then you've probably discovered many good leadership resources, such as books, CDs, or DVDs. Share those with your leader. Once again, the approach you take is very important. Rather than saying, "Boy, do you need this!" say something like, "I just got through with this book, and I thought you might enjoy it too." Or if you find some kind of a connection or hook that you think might appeal to him, say, "I was reading this wonderful book, and I thought of you; the author and you have a similar background. I think you might like it." And then give him a copy of his own. If that resource is well received, you might try following up with others.

6. Publicly Affirm Your Leader

Some people fear that if they say positive things about an ineffective leader they work for, they will be misleading others. Or they worry that others will think they have poor judgment. But other people are aware of an ineffective leader's limitations, and as long as your affirmation is truthful and focuses on your leader's strengths, it won't reflect badly on you. In fact, it will engender others' respect. Your affirmation for your leader will help him develop confidence, not only in himself but also in you.

It's hard to find a downside to adding value to your leader and organization, especially if you maintain a long view. In time, people will recognize your talent. Others will value your contribution. They will admire your ability to succeed and to help others—even those less talented than you—succeed. You just can't allow yourself to give in to the short-term frustration you feel. If you do find that the frustration is getting the better of you, it might be time to change jobs.

Challenge #3

THE MULTI-HAT CHALLENGE:
One Head . . . Many Hats

THE KEY TO SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING THE MULTI-HAT CHALLENGE:

Knowing what hat to put on and
then enjoying the challenge.

I held my first leadership position in 1969, but it wasn't until 1974 that I hired my first employee, Stan Toler. I was delighted to have someone working with me, because I realized that I could not do my job alone. I hired Stan as my assistant pastor. That probably sounds simple enough, but if you were to talk to Stan, his side of the story would be a little different. I've heard him describe that job as choir director, youth pastor, senior-adult pastor, Sunday school director, Vacation Bible School director, bus-ministry pastor, custodian, and general gofer (including picking up my dry cleaning and gassing up my Ford Pinto). If ever there was a leader in the middle who had to deal with the Multi-Hat Challenge, it was Stan!

The Pressure of Wearing Many Hats

The predicament Stan faced isn't unusual for most leaders in the middle of an organization. While it's true that people at every level of an organization have strong demands placed on them, leaders in the middle who desire to practice 360-Degree Leadership experience pressures that others don't. Here's what I mean:

People at the Bottom of an Organization

When people are first starting out at the bottom of an organization, they usually perform a limited number of tasks that are assigned to them. Those tasks may be challenging. They may be physically or mentally demanding. They may require great skill. But most of the time, they require only one "hat." For example, thanks to Henry Ford, people on the production line were given one task to do, and they performed it over and over, though some companies now try to give workers some relief from endless repetition.

Cooks working on the line in a restaurant, such as the grill station, have a very narrow set of responsibilities: they get their stations ready before service, they grill food to order during service, and they clean their stations when they're done. Theirs are not jobs everyone can do—they require speed, skill, and stamina. But working a station on the line requires one set of skills. Likewise, representatives in a call center do one main thing—they talk to customers and either sell products, make appointments, or solve problems. Once again, it's not something everyone can excel at, but it is a

responsibility that is very focused.

People who know their jobs and perform them well can become world-class practitioners of their craft. They can be content in their work and achieve success. But if they can do only one thing—or are willing to do only one thing—they will probably not "move up" as leaders. Leadership requires the ability to do many things well. To use a sports analogy, it's less like trying to win a single race and more like trying to compete in the decathlon.

People at the Top of an Organization

Leaders at the top of an organization have their own sets of challenges. For example, they feel the weight of success or failure for the entire organization—no doubt about it. But they also have a luxury that leaders in the middle don't—they can choose what to do. They can determine their priorities, focus on their strengths, and direct their time and energy to only those things that give the organization the greatest return. Anything else they can either delegate or dismiss.

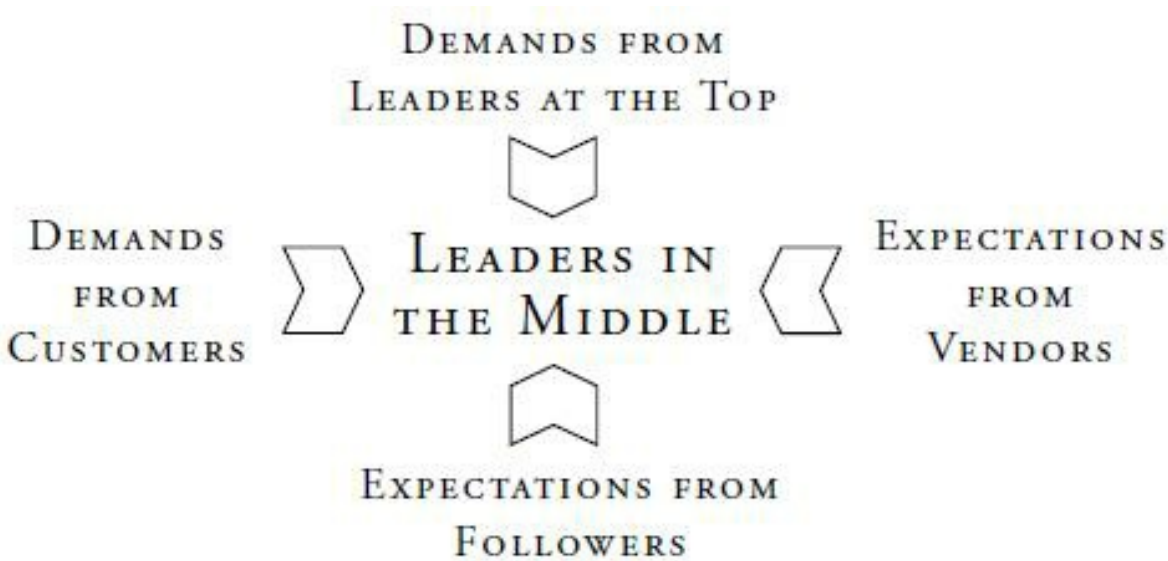
It's ironic that to become leaders, people must be able to do many things well, but in order to become leaders at the top, they must do fewer things with great excellence. In fact, successful leaders figure this out as they move from the middle to the top of an organization. I've never met a successful CEO yet who isn't focused and who doesn't limit himself to the one, two, or three things he does best.

People in the Middle of the Organization

Leaders in the middle, on the other hand, usually experience the Multi-Hat Challenge on a daily basis. They must perform tasks and have knowledge beyond their personal experience. And they often are forced to deal with multiple shifting priorities, often with limited time and resources. My friend Douglas Randlett calls this the "handyman syndrome."

Leaders in the middle usually experience the Multi-Hat Challenge on a daily basis.

The following diagram illustrates the dynamic that most leaders in the middle of an organization have to deal with:



Take, for example, a grill cook who decides to move up and become a sous-chef (the person who usually runs the kitchen in a restaurant). When he was a cook, he had to please only one person, the sous-chef, and he took orders only from him or her. But when he becomes the sous-chef, his world changes

because he is now the person who runs the kitchen day-to-day. As the sous-chef, there are specific things he must do during service. As each order comes into the kitchen, he must tell the cooks at every station what to cook. It's his job to coordinate all of the various cooks' efforts so that the food they are cooking on the different stations is ready at the same time for a table's order. He is also responsible for interacting with the waiters, helping them satisfy the customers, and solving their problems. When the waiters are under pressure and feeling the demands of the customers, the sous-chef feels it.

But those aren't the only pressures the sous-chef experiences. Every cook in the kitchen is looking to him for leadership. During service, he determines how the kitchen is run and sets the standard for how the food is prepared. He also schedules their work, makes sure they get paid, and mediates the disputes that always occur.

When he's not actually on the line during service, the sous-chef also has the responsibility of ordering food and supplies from vendors. His priorities are quality and price, but each vendor has expectations of him. They want his business and his time.

Of course, the sous-chef is also accountable to the chef de cuisine or the owner of the restaurant, who wants a business that is well run and profitable. When he was a cook working at the grill station, he wore only one hat. He was insulated from the customers. He rarely had to interact with the owner. He didn't have to work with vendors. And he had no staff to lead. Life was much simpler as a cook. In fact, dealing with the Multi-Hat Challenge is one of the things that keep people from

moving up in an organization. Many workers decide they would rather not have all the headaches of leadership and stay where they are, doing just a few things and not wearing a lot of hats.

How to Handle the Multi-Hat Challenge

Billy Hornsby, cofounder of ARC and director for EQUIP's European leadership development initiative, said that being in the middle of an organization is like being the middle child in a family. These leaders have to learn to get along with everybody around them and survive the various "family" dynamics—following, leading, cajoling, appeasing, and partnering as needed. It's not an easy task.

> *"Being in the middle of an organization is like being the middle child in a family."*
> —Billy Hornsby

So what are leaders in the middle of an organization to do when they are required to wear many hats but have only one head? Here are my suggestions:

1. Remember That the Hat Sets the Context When Interacting with Others

Every role or "hat" you are asked to wear has its own responsibilities and objectives. If you change hats, keep in mind that the context changes. You wouldn't interact in the

same way with your spouse, your children, your boss, and your employees, would you? The goal often determines the role and the approach to take.

2. Don't Use One Hat to Accomplish a Task Required for Another Hat

In her capacity as my assistant, Linda Eggers constantly attends meetings of my organization's top leaders when I am traveling. She does that so that she can keep me up to date on strategy and important changes that are occurring. When she is working in that capacity, Linda never abuses her "communication link" hat to get her own way, nor does she put on her "speaking for John" hat to preemptively stop leaders from taking action by saying something like, "John wouldn't want that." She is very cognizant that her words carry great weight.

Likewise, after Linda attends those types of meetings and she fills me in on what happened, she is also careful to represent the people in the meeting fairly and accurately. She will give her opinions, but she works not to "color" what has been said or done.

Linda, like many assistants, wears many hats. She has become an expert at knowing what hat to wear in any given situation, and she can change hats in an instant. She has a very powerful position, but she never uses one hat to accomplish tasks that may be required of her in another capacity. She takes the time to cultivate each working relationship on its own terms, and acts accordingly. It's often a

balancing act, but it's one she does exceptionally well.

3. When You Change Hats, Don't Change Your Personality

I mentioned that you shouldn't treat your spouse the same way you treat your employees. That's just common sense. That doesn't mean, however, that you should change your personality according to who you're with. Your attitude and behavior should be consistent and predictable with everyone. Otherwise, you won't be trustworthy in the eyes of anyone you work with.

4. Don't Neglect Any Hat You Are Responsible to Wear

Before Rod Loy became a top leader, he served as an executive in a large organization. For six months during a leadership shortage, he also functioned as the interim leader of two different additional departments. To make sure he didn't drop any balls, he literally set up three offices. He would spend five hours a day in the executive office and work on only those responsibilities there. He would then go to one of the other department's office for two hours to do those duties, and finally to the third office for two hours to perform those duties.

Why did he do that? He discovered that if he neglected the duties of any hat for a day, he fell behind. The physical separation of the three offices helped him make the mental jump needed to keep all his responsibilities moving forward. You

may not need or want to go to such lengths. However, if you are being asked to wear many hats by people in your organization, then you must be sure not to neglect any one of them.

5. Remain Flexible

The key to taking on the Multi-Hat Challenge is knowing what hat to put on at any time and enjoying the challenge it offers. How does one do that? The secret is to remain flexible. Because there are so many demands on leaders in the middle of an organization, they can't afford to be rigid; they need to be able to turn on a dime or change hats at a moment's notice.

Some people love a new challenge and thrive on the rapidly changing demands and nature of leadership in the middle of an organization. It energizes them. Others find it less appealing. But it's something all 360-Degree Leaders must learn to navigate if they want to be successful and influence others from wherever they are in the organization.

Challenge #4

THE EGO CHALLENGE:
You're Often Hidden in the Middle

THE KEY TO SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING THE EGO CHALLENGE:

Remember that consistently good leadership does get noticed.

Every now and then when I'm teaching a daylong leadership conference, an attendee will come up during the break, look at me, and say, "Wow, what a great job. I want to do what you do!"

My job is wonderful, and I'll admit that. But then I'll say to the person, "Yes, but do you want to do what I did to be able to do what I do?" People who meet me today see only the good stuff, the fruit of thirty years of work. They look at the well-lit platform, the large audiences, and the kind, warm reception I often get, and they see that other people do a lot of work to get things ready, while all I have to do is teach.

But it's naive for anyone to think it's always been this way. When I first started teaching leadership, I drove to engagements in my Pinto. I taught to groups of about a dozen people, and I didn't get paid to do it. I taught people just

because I wanted to help them. As my reputation grew, so did people's requests for me to speak. Usually that meant finding a way to fit travel into an already packed schedule with long flights, unhealthy food, and long hours. In my early leadership conferences, for the price of admission, I taught about thirty hours of material over five days.

When I became "popular," my wife, Margaret, often had to travel with me, meaning that now two of us had to work to get the job done instead of one. (And we had to pay babysitters to take care of the kids.) We spent hours packing boxes of supplies, notebooks, and books, which we had to load into our trunk or lug onto planes. The few hours I spent on a stool teaching probably looked pretty glamorous to some people. The days spent preparing the lesson and dozens of hours of logistics and travel were not.

Successful leaders are like icebergs. When you look at an iceberg, you see only about 10 percent of it, and the rest of it is hidden under the water. When you look at successful leaders, you see only a fraction of their lives. You see the part that looks really good, but there's usually a lot that remains hidden that's neither exciting nor glamorous. Tennis star Arthur Ashe said, "True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever the cost." True leadership is the same.

"True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever the cost."
—ARTHUR ASHE

How to Handle the Ego Challenge

It's normal for any person to want recognition, and leaders are the same. The fact that leaders in the middle of the pack are often hidden—and as a result they don't get the credit or recognition they desire and often deserve—can be a real ego buster. The challenge is to be a team player and remain content while contributing. Here's how to do that:

1. Concentrate More on Your Duties Than Your Dreams

Noted composer and conductor Leonard Bernstein was once asked which instrument he considered to be the most difficult to play. After a moment he responded, "Second fiddle. I can get plenty of first violinists, but to find one who can play second fiddle with enthusiasm—that's a problem." We can often become so focused on our dreams and goals that we lose sight of the responsibilities right in front of us.

We can often become so focused on our dreams and goals that we lose sight of the responsibilities right in front of us.

Effective leaders pay more attention to production than to promotion. They get the job done. Poet Walt Whitman wrote:

> There is a man in the world who never gets turned down,
> wherever he chances to stray;
> He gets the glad hand in the populous town,
> or out where the farmers make hay;

He is greeted with pleasure on deserts of sand,
and deep in the aisles of the woods;
Wherever he goes there is a welcoming hand—
he's the man who delivers the goods.

If you consistently deliver the goods, you will be noticed. And more importantly, you will be content with the job you do even at those times when others don't recognize your efforts.

2. Appreciate the Value of Your Position

Not everyone will understand or appreciate the work you do. So it's important that you do. A cute anecdote from Nobel Prize–winner Charles H. Townes illustrates this well. Townes commented, "It's like the beaver told the rabbit as they stared up at the immense wall of Hoover Dam, 'No, I didn't actually build it myself. But it was based on an idea of mine.'"

Every position has value, but too often we don't value that position. You make it important by valuing it. If we despise the position we have, it may be because of what I call "destination disease," which can also be called the greener grass syndrome. If we focus on being some other place because we think it's better, then we will neither enjoy where we are nor do what we must to succeed.

3. Find Satisfaction in Knowing the Real Reason for the Success of a Project

In his book, *Good to Great* (Harper Business, 2001), Jim Collins writes about "level five" leaders. He says that these

leaders, who led their organizations quietly and humbly, were much more effective than flashy, charismatic, high-profile leaders. One of the reasons I believe that's true is that good leaders understand they don't really deserve all the credit for the success of an organization. Success comes from the people who get the work done—especially the leaders in the middle of the organization.

If we focus on being some other place because we think it's better, then we will neither enjoy where we are nor do what we must to succeed.

When you do a job well, and you know the impact of the work you did, that should give you great satisfaction, and it should also motivate you. When you know you're making a significant contribution, you need less external motivation. The definition of high morale is: "I make a difference."

4. Embrace the Compliments of Others in the Middle of the Pack

There is no higher compliment than acknowledgment and appreciation from someone whose circumstances, position, or experience is similar to yours. Isn't that true? A musician may enjoy a compliment from a fan, but praise from another musician means more. When an entrepreneur says someone is good at spotting an opportunity, you believe her. Likewise, when someone else who is leading from the middle of the organization tells you, "Well done," take it to heart.

Novelist Mark Twain said, "One compliment can keep me

going for a whole month." Based on his comment, I've come up with a scale that measures the power of a compliment and what I suspect is its lasting impact based on who says it.

SOURCE OF THE COMPLIMENT	DURATION
Those who've done your work	a year
Those who've seen your work	a month
Those who know of your work	a week
Those who think they know your work	a day
Those who don't know your work	an hour
Those who don't work	a minute

Everyone enjoys kind words from the boss, and many seek them out. But the praise of a colleague who's walked in your shoes really does mean more.

5. UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SELF-PROMOTION AND SELFLESS PROMOTION

Sir Isaac Newton discovered the laws of gravity in the 1600s. When he introduced those laws to the scientific world, it revolutionized astronomical studies. But if it weren't for Edmund Halley, few people are likely to have learned about Newton's ideas.

Halley was a sounding board for Newton's ideas, he challenged Newton's assumptions, he corrected Newton's mathematical calculations when they were off, and he even drafted geometric diagrams to support Newton's work. When Newton was hesitant to publish his ideas, Halley first convinced him to write the manuscript, then edited it and

supervised its publication. Halley even financed the printing of it, even though he had fewer financial resources than Newton. The final work, *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, made Newton one of the most highly regarded thinkers in history.

Halley understood the difference between self-promotion and selfless promotion. It was more important to him to see Newton's ideas shared than to receive personal recognition for helping him. He knew how important those ideas were, and he wanted to get them out into the world.

That's what people do who understand selfless promotion. Take a look at the difference between the two kinds of promotion:

SELF-PROMOTION	VS.	SELFLESS PROMOTION
Me first		Others first
Move up		Build up
Guard information		Share information
Take credit		Give credit
Hog the ball (star)		Pass the ball
Dodge the ball (blame)		Share the ball
Manipulate others		Motivate others

Self-promotion says, "If you don't toot your own horn, no one will toot it for you." Selfless promotion says, "I just want to help the team make beautiful music!"

Tim Sanders, author of *Love Is the Killer App* (Crown Business, 2002), talks about the abundance mind-set, an idea promoted by Stephen Covey a decade earlier. He says there are plenty of resources, credit, and opportunities to go around. In

fact, he believes that a scarcity mind-set is at the root of most conflict. Leaders that excel in the middle of the pack have an abundance mind-set. And if you lead well from the middle of an organization, you won't stay there forever. Good leadership always gets noticed. Legendary Green Bay Packer football coach Vince Lombardi said, "Some of us will do our jobs well, and some will not. But we will all be judged by only one thing —the result." Good leaders get results—and they get noticed.

Challenge #5

THE FULFILLMENT CHALLENGE:
Leaders Like the Front More Than the Middle

THE KEY TO SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING THE FULFILLMENT CHALLENGE:

Leadership is more disposition
than position—influence others
from wherever you are.

Since you are reading this book, I assume that you either possess a natural leadership bent or have developed a desire to lead others. If that is true, then you probably want to be leading from "out front" or "on the top." Perhaps you've heard the old saying about the view from the middle of the pack. It's said that when you're the lead dog, your view always changes. If you're not the lead dog, your view always stays the same—and that view is not exactly what one would call "scenic." I enjoy that joke, and I've told it in conferences. But the truth of the matter is that the dog in front of the pack isn't the leader. The person driving the sled is—and that individual is actually in the back.

Wherever people find themselves in life, they usually

possess the natural desire to move up. They want greater recognition. They want to make more money. They want to live in a better home. They want to advance and improve. Leaders are no different. They want to move up rather than stay put. They want to make a greater impact. They want to be at the front of a pack or the top of an organization, especially early in their lives and careers. But is being out front really all that it's cracked up to be? I think the answer is yes and no.

WHY LEADERS LIKE THE FRONT

There are advantages to being in front or on top of an organization. But the same things that can benefit leaders can also make leadership difficult. It is almost always a double-edged sword, and anyone who sees only the positives without recognizing the negatives is either naive or inexperienced. I think you will agree with my perspective as you read these observations about why leaders like to be out front.

1. THE FRONT IS THE MOST RECOGNIZED POSITION FOR A LEADER

Romanian essayist E. M. Cioran stated, "If each of us were to confess his most secret desire, the one that inspires all his plans, all his actions, he would say, 'I want to be praised.'" Isn't that true? Everyone enjoys praise and recognition. And since leaders, who are usually most visible, often receive the credit when a job is well done, many people desire to become leaders.

"If each of us were to confess his most secret desire, the one that inspires all his plans, all his actions, he would say, 'I want to be praised.'"
—E. M. CIORAN

Recognition is a double-edged sword. When things go wrong, the person recognized as responsible is also the leader. When the football team has a losing season, the quarterback gets the blame. When the baseball team keeps losing games, the manager gets fired. When the big account doesn't sign on with the company, the person who led the effort is held responsible. Yes, being in front can be good for your ego, but it can also cost you your job.

2. THE VIEW IS BETTER FROM THE FRONT

I once saw an interview that a newscaster conducted with an accomplished mountain climber. The journalist asked, "Why do you climb mountains? What is it that causes you to go through all the preparation, the training, the risk, and the pain?"

The mountain climber looked at the newsman and said, "It's obvious that you've never been to the top of a mountain." Isn't it true that the view from the top of a mountain is incredible? It's thrilling. The perspective is incredible. It must be even more exciting if it's a peak that can only be reached by climbing.

Tom Mullins, the former football coach I mentioned earlier who now leads a large organization in Palm Beach, Florida, said, "It's often hard to read the scoreboard from the middle of the pack. It's much easier to see it when you're at the top of

the organization." There is a perspective one has from the front (or top) of an organization that cannot be had from anywhere else. But I believe responsibility comes with that perspective. If you see problems that threaten to derail the organization, harm employees, or cheat customers, you have a responsibility to try to resolve them—no matter how messy, costly, or difficult it is. Leaders at the front don't have the freedom to neglect what their position allows them to see.

Leaders at the front don't have the freedom to neglect what their position allows them to see.

3. Leaders in Front Get to Determine the Direction

When I first began leading, I thought that the leader in front could control many things in an organization. The longer I lead, the more I discover how little the leader controls. (The only people who have total control in their lives are those who don't lead anything. They are accountable only to themselves, not others.) Good leaders of organizations get to control mainly two things: direction and timing. Unfortunately, if they aren't leading well and people aren't following them, they can't even control those two things.

4. Leaders Can Set the Pace

Leaders love progress. It's one of their primary motivations. That's why explorer David Livingstone said, "I will go

anywhere provided it is forward." As a leader, you probably love moving forward, and the faster the better. But that also can work against you. If you are running so far ahead that your people can't follow, then your organization won't succeed. Achievers often cross the finish line first, but leaders rarely do. A leader's success comes from bringing others across the finish line with them.

In *Winning with People*, the Patience Principle states that the journey with others is slower than the journey alone. That's true in every area of life where you are trying to lead. A trip to the grocery store is much faster alone than it is if you have to take your children. A business trip with a group of colleagues is never as fast as one by yourself. (Doesn't it take thirty minutes just to get everyone to agree on a place to eat?) A single golfer can play a course in nearly half the time it takes a foursome.

As a leader, you may be able to model the behavior you desire in others, but you will not be able to go as quickly as you want. Too many people seem to share the attitude of humorous poet Ogden Nash, who wrote, "Progress might have been all right once, but it's been going on entirely too long." The only people who will fight for progress the way you do, and move as quickly, will probably be other leaders.

5. LEADERS ENJOY BEING IN ON THE ACTION

Because leaders like to make things happen, they always enjoy being where the action is. But many times that is not at the top or in front of an organization. Major decisions are made in those places, but often the action really occurs in the middle

of an organization. That's where most of the exciting activity is. Doug Carter, who is vice president of EQUIP—the nonprofit organization I founded to teach leadership overseas—is a great example of a leader who loves the action. Doug could be the number one leader at dozens of first-rate organizations. In fact, he used to lead another outstanding nonprofit organization. But the vision and mission of EQUIP captivated him, and instead of being the top guy, he has chosen to be the number two person at EQUIP. Doug is making an impact internationally from that position. I cannot imagine the team without him.

How to Be Fulfilled in the Middle of the Pack: See the Big Picture

Education pioneer Henrietta Mears said, "The person who keeps busy helping the one who is below him won't have time to envy the person above him." The right attitude is absolutely essential to contentment in the middle of an organization. Truly, leadership is more disposition than position. With the right attitude and the right skills, you can influence others from wherever you are in an organization.

So how do you develop an attitude of contentment and fulfillment right where you are? Start by doing the following five things:

1. Develop Strong Relationships with Key People

A *Peanuts* cartoon by Charles Schulz shows Lucy telling Snoopy, "There are times when you really bug me, but I must admit there are also times when I feel like giving you a big hug." In reply, Snoopy thinks, *That's the way I am . . . huggable and bug-gable.* I think that's true of just about everybody—including myself. There are good and bad things about everybody. The key to fulfillment isn't making every interaction with others go smoothly; it comes from developing strong relationships with them.

"The person who keeps busy helping the one who is below him won't have time to envy the person above him."

—HENRIETTA MEARS

It's more important to get along with people than to get ahead of them. If you make it your goal to reach out to others and build relationships with them, you will derive fulfillment wherever you are. And whatever you do, don't give up too easily on others if you at first don't like them or easily connect with them. You may be surprised by how, over time, a potential adversary can become an ally.

2. DEFINE A WIN IN TERMS OF TEAMWORK

Legendary basketball coach John Wooden said, "The main ingredient of stardom is the rest of the team." In other words, teamwork is what creates success, and we shouldn't lose sight of that. One player may be crucial to a team, but one player cannot make a team. That is also true of leaders. One leader, no

matter how good, does not make a team.

When I think of someone who created a win using teamwork and led others from the middle, I think of Bob Christian, former fullback for the Atlanta Falcons. Christian was called "the most complete fullback in football."[1] Dan Reeves, an NFL veteran coach with several Super Bowl rings said of Christian that he was the "best blocker I've ever seen."[2] More than once he was named player of the game strictly because of his blocking. Many people have never heard of Christian, even if they are football fans. His stats for runs, catches, and touchdowns may not have set any records, but he was fulfilled—and successful—as a ball player. Anyone who values teamwork and saw Christian play remembers him.

3. Engage in Continual Communication

One of the frustrations of leaders who aren't in front or on top is that they are several steps removed from the source of the organization's vision. And since the vision is constantly being shaped and formed, it's important to engage in continual communication. If you're "in" on the vision and continually keeping up-to-date, then you won't be blindsided by changes or demoralized by being out of the loop.

As a leader in the middle of an organization, being the recipient of communication is important, but equally or more important is communicating up. And that takes great effort because it doesn't occur naturally. It takes effort and intentionality. As you interact with your leaders, let them know how you are advancing the vision. Get their feedback and ask

questions to find out if there are other things you should know to more effectively pass on the vision to others. The more you effectively fulfill your role as a leader in the middle, the more fulfilled you will be.

4. Gain Experience and Maturity

In *The Autobiography of Harry Golden*, the author wrote, "The arrogance of the young is a direct result of not having known enough consequences. The turkey that every day greedily approaches the farmer who tosses him grain is not wrong. It is just that no one ever told him about Thanksgiving."

Maturity doesn't come automatically. My friend Ed Cole often said, "Maturity doesn't come with age. It begins with the acceptance of responsibility." When you begin looking at your life and work with more experience and a longer view, being in front doesn't seem as important. Focusing on the responsibilities with which you are entrusted wherever you are and completing them with excellence brings greater fulfillment than the position, title, or prestige one gets from being on top.

The more you effectively fulfill your role as a leader in the middle, the more fulfilled you will be.

With maturity often comes patience. (Patience, however, often gets the credit that belongs to fatigue!) Patience gives you time to learn, network, and gain wisdom. Humorist Arnold Glasow said, "The key to everything is patience. You get the chicken by hatching the egg—not smashing it."

5. Put the Team Above Your Personal Success

When the stakes are high, good team members put the success of the team ahead of their own personal gains. An excellent example of this can be seen in the actions of two high-profile leaders of the British government during World War II—Winston Churchill and Clement Attlee. Two leaders could not have been more different. Churchill was a member of the conservative party, Attlee of the labor party. Churchill was fierce, fiery, and proud; Atlee, quiet and unassuming. Churchill is quoted as saying of Attlee: "He is a modest man with much to be modest about." Yet the two men served together admirably during the war for the sake of England. When Churchill was made prime minister of England in 1940, he chose Attlee as a member of his war cabinet, eventually naming him deputy prime minister. In fact, Attlee was the only other person besides Churchill to serve in the war cabinet for the entire war.[3]

One of the keys to England's winning the war was that both leaders put the country's best interest above their own political ambitions. The depth of the two men's differences concerning leadership and government became more obvious after the war in 1945, when the two opposed each other in the election for prime minister, and Churchill was defeated by Attlee.

These two leaders did what they thought was right, both during the war and after it. They put the nation ahead of their personal gain. As a result, the people of Great Britain won. That's what leadership is really all about—it's about helping others to win. That's much more important than where you are in the organizational chart.

Challenge #6

THE VISION CHALLENGE:
Championing the Vision Is More Difficult When You Didn't Create It

THE KEY TO SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING THE VISION CHALLENGE:

The more you invest in the vision,
the more it becomes your own.

What would you rather do? See your own vision put into action and come to fruition? Or help others fulfill theirs? For people who want to lead, the answer is usually the former. Leaders see possibilities, and they want to seize them. Most of the time they would rather work to fulfill their own vision than someone else's—unless that other leader's vision is really compelling and captivating. Leading from the middle, however, means that you will be asked to become a champion for a vision other than your own. In fact, the reality is that all the people in an organization other than the top leader are going to be asked to fulfill a vision they didn't generate.

How People Respond to the Vision Challenge

So the natural question is: How are you going to respond to the Vision Challenge? Even though your own vision may excite you more than someone else's, to get the opportunity to pursue your own dreams, you will almost certainly have to succeed in achieving the dreams of others.

There are a number of ways people respond when leaders cast vision and attempt to enlist them. The following responses represent a progression, from most negative to most positive.

1. Attack It—Criticize and Sabotage the Vision

Not everyone is going to buy into the vision of an organization, even if it is compelling, and even if the leader does a fantastic job of communicating it. That's just a fact, and it isn't always because the people are bad followers. Take a look at the most common reasons people fail to adopt a worthy vision:

THEY DIDN'T HELP CREATE IT. Let's face it. Most people don't like change, and whenever someone begins casting a new vision, change is inevitable. I used to think that leaders liked change and followers didn't. But as I've gained maturity, I've come to realize that leaders don't like change any more than followers do—unless, of course, it's their idea!

People's attitudes toward change are different when they help create it. Participation increases ownership. When you're

an owner, you see things differently. You step up. You take better care of whatever it is. If you doubt that, answer this question: When was the last time you waxed a rental car? It just doesn't happen. People are up on things that they're in on.

Leaders don't like change any more than followers do—unless, of course, it's their idea!

THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND IT. People don't buy into a vision that they don't understand. It just doesn't happen. And just because leaders have cast a vision in a clear and compelling manner, doesn't mean that their people really understand it. Different kinds and styles of communication don't connect equally for everybody.

Ken Blanchard once asked Max DePree, author of *Leadership Is an Art*, what he thought the leader's role was in an organization. DePree said, "You have to act like a third-grade teacher. You have to repeat the vision over and over and over again until the people get it." And if a leader is really wise, she communicates it in many ways, in many settings, using many methods.

THEY DON'T AGREE WITH IT. Some people react negatively to a vision because they think it's impossible to achieve. Others —though it happens much less often—because they think it's too small. Still others balk because the vision has changed since the time they originally signed on. But more often than not, the real issue has more to do with the leader. If people disagree with the vision, it's often because they have a problem with the person who cast it.

If people disagree with the vision, it's often because they have a problem with the person who cast it.

The Law of Buy-In found in *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* says that people buy into the leader, then the vision. If they believe in leaders, then they embrace what those leaders believe in. Even when their leaders promote a vision that isn't compelling, the people who have already bought into them continue to support them. However, this variation on the Law of Buy-In is also true: No matter how good the vision is, if people don't believe in the leader, they will have problems buying in to the vision.

THEY DON'T KNOW THE VISION. When it comes to results, there is absolutely no difference between people not knowing an organization's vision and the organization not having a vision at all. The inevitable result is dissatisfaction and discouragement.

If you have brought new people into an organization since the last time vision was cast, then you have people who don't know your vision. I apologize if this sounds painfully obvious, but this is an issue all the time in organizations. Growing businesses often hire new employees but have nothing in place to make sure that they know and embrace the vision. Every organization needs a built-in process for passing on the vision.

But even if you make sure that every person who becomes a part of your organization hears the vision, that doesn't mean they all know it. Vision leaks. It needs to be communicated clearly, creatively, and continually.

Imagine that every person in your organization has a tank where they keep the vision. Now assume that there is a crack or small hole in that tank. Because everybody is human (and therefore flawed), you can't eliminate these leaks. The best you can do is keep refilling the tanks. Some leaders don't like to keep repeating themselves, but there really is no alternative if you want everyone to know the vision.

Vision leaks. It needs to be communicated clearly, creatively, and continually.

THEY FEEL UNNEEDED TO ACHIEVE IT. There are three different kinds of attitudes when it comes to enlisting people to help fulfill a vision. The first one says, "We're going to do this with or without you." The second says, "We sure would like you to help us do this." The third says, "We can't do this without you." You can guess which one inspires and motivates people to participate and give their best.

Old-style autocratic leaders may have been able to get away with the first type of attitude, but that doesn't fly with people today, at least not in nations where people are free. The second approach sometimes works, but neither is as effective as the third. People who understand how important their part is are motivated to persevere and work with excellence, even in the face of obstacles and problems.

A good example of this occurred during World War II in a parachute factory. Workers made parachutes by the thousands for the war effort, but it was a painfully tedious job. They spent long hours at a sewing machine stitching miles of plain white fabric. Every morning workers were reminded that every stitch

was part of a lifesaving operation. Their husbands, brothers, or sons might wear the parachute they sewed that day. Those lives could not be saved without their efforts. The fact that the vision was continually before them and they knew that it would not be completed without them kept them going.

THEY AREN'T READY FOR IT. I love this cartoon by the late Jeff MacNelly, Pulitzer Prize–winning editorial cartoonist and creator of the comic strip *Shoe*:

SHOE by JEFF MacNELLY
OKAY, BOYS, TO BE A TRUE WINNER, YOU HAVE TO VISUALIZE THE WINNER IN YOURSELF.
SKYLER, YOU'LL HAVE TO SQUINT A LITTLE.
44
77
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It may be sad to say, but some people are not ready—emotionally, intellectually, or professionally—to step up, embrace the vision, and help to make it happen. If they are willing but unable, then they can be trained and developed. If they are neither willing nor able, then there may not be much you can do to help them.

360-Degree Leaders are informational conduits that connect the top and the bottom of the organization. When any one of these six issues is a problem—the people didn't help create it, the people don't understand it, the people don't agree with it, the people don't know the vision, the people feel unneeded to

achieve it, or the people aren't ready for it—then the conduit becomes clogged, and the vision cannot flow from the leaders at the top to the people who actually accomplish the work. If the vision fails to connect with the workers, it will never come to fruition.

2. Ignore It—Do Their Own Thing

Some people may not attack the vision, but they don't support it either. Instead, they pretend it doesn't exist and do their own thing. Leaders cannot do this and still maintain their integrity and effectiveness. One leader I spoke to, who for many years worked in the middle of an organization, said that he remembers a time when his boss wanted him to confront an employee on a dress code issue. The problem for this leader was that he didn't agree with the policy. But he believed in the larger vision of the organization and wanted to support his leader, so he followed through with the confrontation. It turned out to be especially difficult because the employee thought the rule was petty. But the midlevel leader firmly supported his leader. The employee never knew that this leader actually agreed with the employee, not with his boss.

3. Abandon It—Leave the Organization

If the vision violates your principles or doesn't speak to what you value deep down, leaving the organization may be the appropriate action. Sometimes that is the best option—leaving with honor. That way the leader in the middle is neither undermining the vision, nor is he endorsing something with

which he cannot agree. I must mention one caution, however. If a leader in the middle of the organization bails out for the wrong reasons, he may find himself in a similar situation again in another organization. If you find yourself in a situation where you are considering leaving an organization, make sure you're not doing it because of selfishness or ego.

4. Adapt to It—Find a Way to Align with the Vision

At the very least, a good employee finds a way to align himself with the vision of his organization. David Branker told me the story of Bret, a middle manager whose job was to provide computer support and data tracking for an organization's training department. Bret was frustrated because he didn't think the job he was asked to do was contributing significantly to the company's vision.

Instead of sulking or complaining, he approached his leader to talk about the issue. Together, they discovered how his department might add greater value to the organization by creating systems that used technology to make training faster, more efficient, and more cost-effective. By aligning himself with the vision, Bret not only furthered the mission, added value to the organization, and improved the bottom line, but he also found greater personal fulfillment.

Douglas Randlett, who works with former football coach Pastor Tom Mullins, did his doctoral dissertation on the issue of leading from the middle of an organization. He said that when the vision of the leader in the middle doesn't align with

that of the top leadership, low job satisfaction is always the result. When those two factors do align, satisfaction is high, and so is success.

5. Champion It—Take the Leader's Vision and Make It a Reality

Vision may begin with one person, but it is accomplished only through the efforts of many people. Taking the leader's vision and working to fulfill it should be the response of 360-Degree Leaders. They should strive to take the vision from *me* to *we*.

John W. Gardner said, "The prospects never looked brighter and the problems never looked tougher. Anyone who isn't stirred by both of those statements is too tired to be of much use to us in the days ahead."

Vision begins with one person, but it is only accomplished by many people.

During the thirty-five years that I've led organizations, I have always worked hard to transfer the vision I possessed to my staff. Some people embraced it; others didn't.

Those Who Championed the Vision	Those Who Did Not
Placed the organization's needs first	Placed their own needs first
Kept the vision before the people	Kept themselves before the peo
Represented me well to others	Represented themselves well to
Understood their roles	Misunderstood their roles

The people who didn't accept the vision neither championed it nor transferred it to their followers. As a result, the people they led often didn't contribute to the overall success of the organization.

6. Add Value to It

The most positive response to a leader's vision is to go beyond championing it and to actually add value to it. At that point, the vision becomes something more. It has greater value to the leader, greater value to the recipients of the vision, and greater value to the person who contributed to it.

Not everyone gets the opportunity to add value to the vision. There is a prerequisite for getting the opportunity to do it, and that is championing the vision as it already exists. But here's the great thing: Once you have begun to add value to the vision, then you have eliminated the Vision Challenge, because you're no longer championing someone else's vision; you are championing a vision to which you have contributed.

Nobody champions a vision and adds value to it like my team at EQUIP, the faith-based nonprofit organization I founded in 1996. From the very beginning, our mission was to train leaders. Initially, our strategy was to work in three distinct areas: in academia, in urban areas, and internationally. In 2001 we narrowed our focus and refined our vision, deciding to turn every bit of our attention to training leaders overseas. Everyone on the EQUIP team was a vision champion from the start, but key leaders did even more than champion the vision. They were instrumental in helping us recognize the need to focus our attention and try to do one thing with total

excellence, not three things merely well.

What emerged was the Million Leaders Mandate, our attempt to train one million spiritual leaders around the world. As I write this, more than 700,000 leaders are in training. By January 2006, when this book goes to print, we will be training on every continent except Antarctica, and we will have reached our goal of training more than one million leaders. Already we are looking toward the goal of training a *second* million leaders!

Every day members of the EQUIP team champion the vision—with the leaders we want to train at no cost, with the associate trainers who donate their money and time to train leaders across the globe, and to the donors, whose every dollar goes to underwriting the project. They are partners championing the vision that we created together. And for that, my gratitude knows no bounds.

Challenge #7

THE INFLUENCE CHALLENGE: *Leading Others Beyond Your Position Is Not Easy*

THE KEY TO SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING THE INFLUENCE CHALLENGE:

Think influence, not position.

As you have read about the previous six challenges, perhaps you have felt that their impact on you is minimal. If so, you can consider yourself fortunate. Nobody, however, escapes the Influence Challenge, no matter how wonderful an organization you work for or how great your boss is. Leading others beyond your position is not easy. If real leadership were easy, anybody would do it, and everyone could excel at it.

Most good leaders believe in themselves and their leadership. They are confident that if others would follow them, then the team would benefit and accomplish its goals. So why doesn't that always happen? Why don't people who report to them line up to follow? Because they don't have to! Leadership is influence. If you have neither position nor influence, people will not follow you. And the further outside your position they

are, the less likely they are to let you lead them. That's why 360-Degree Leaders work to change their thinking from *I want a position that will make people follow me* to, *I want to become a person whom people will want to follow.*

PEOPLE FOLLOW LEADERS . . .

It's a fallacy to believe that people would automatically follow you if you were the positional leader. Leaders who have actually been on top know that it doesn't work that way. Do people follow you now? If they follow you today, then they will follow you tomorrow when you have a better position. But if people don't follow you where you are currently, then they won't follow you where you're going either.

360-Degree Leaders work to change their thinking from, I want a position that will make people follow me *to,* I want to become a person whom people will want to follow.

The only solution to the Influence Challenge is to become the kind of leader other people want to follow. And what kind of leader would that be?

PEOPLE FOLLOW LEADERS THEY KNOW—LEADERS WHO CARE

Many people try to move others by criticizing them or trying to "power up" on them. People generally respond by becoming defensive, behaving combatively, or isolating themselves.

Protestant reformer John Knox said, "You cannot antagonize and influence at the same time."

On the other hand, if leaders care about each individual as a person, then people respond well to them. The greater the depth of their concern, the broader and longer lasting their influence. Bo Schembechler, former head coach of the University of Michigan football team, remarked, "Deep down, your players must know you care about them. This is the most important thing. I could never get away with what I do if the players felt I didn't care. They know, in the long run, I'm in their corner."

People can sense how you feel about them. They can tell the difference between leaders who are using them for their own gain and those who want to help them succeed. People warm up to warm people. They get to know the heart of someone who cares, and they respond well to them. I think of it this way: second-mile leaders produce second-mile followers. If you go out of your way to care about others and help them, then they will go out of their way to help you when you ask them to.

People Follow Leaders They Trust—Leaders with Character

Political theorist Thomas Paine said, "I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink, but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death." What gives a leader the strength to exhibit such admirable

qualities? The answer is *character*.

"You cannot antagonize and influence at the same time."
—JOHN KNOX

We tend to put a lot of emphasis on intelligence and skill in this country. And while those things are important, they cannot substitute for strong character. As I teach in *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, trust is the foundation of leadership. A leader who understands all too well how character issues impact leadership is Chuck Colson, the former Nixon aide who was imprisoned in the wake of the Watergate scandal. Colson turned his life around after that ordeal and now lectures on leadership and faith issues. He said: "As you go through life, whether it's in the military, in your business, in the church, or whatever walk of life (and certainly in your family), someone is going to depend on your character more than upon your IQ."

Most people would acknowledge that trustworthiness is important in a leader. What some people don't recognize is the importance of trustworthiness in would-be leaders. Rod Loy, who leads a large organization in Little Rock, Arkansas, said:

> Too many middle leaders say, "When I become the leader, I'll change the way I live." I meet with so many people who are second in command who don't live according to the character code of top leadership. Their thought is, *I don't have to live by that until I become the visible leader.* My belief is, if I don't live by those high standards, I'll never become the leader. I choose to limit my freedoms—because I understand the sacrifices of the position I one day desire to possess.

If you desire to overcome the influence challenge, then develop and exhibit the kind of character that you would find admirable in a top leader. That will pave the way for relationships with others today and prepare you for nonpositional leadership for tomorrow.

People Follow Leaders They Respect—Leaders Who Are Competent

Respect is almost always gained on difficult ground. A leadership position will help a leader only until difficulties arise. Then the leader must arise to meet those difficulties. Leaders who are incapable of meeting challenges may desire respect from their followers and peers, but they rarely get it. They may be liked if they possess good character and care for others, but they won't be highly respected. People may treat them kindly, but they won't listen to them. Everyone may have the right to speak, but not everyone has earned the right to be heard.

While poor leaders demand respect, competent leaders command respect.

While poor leaders demand respect, competent leaders command respect. Being able to do a job well brings a leader credibility. If you think you can do a job—that's confidence. If you actually can do it—that's competence. And there is no substitute for it.

People Follow Leaders They Can

APPROACH—LEADERS WHO ARE CONSISTENT

One middle leader I interviewed while working on this book, whom I will call Fred, told me he once had a very moody leader as his boss. He never knew whether the "good boss" or the "evil boss" would show up at the office on any given day. But Fred learned how to deal with the issue after following the advice of a fellow staff member.

If Fred had a problem at work that would need the attention of the moody boss, he would add that to a running list he kept and took to their weekly staff meeting. Fred was always very careful never to sit next to his boss during the meeting. That way, he had a chance to observe how he treated others as discussion went from person to person around the table. After the boss talked to two or three employees, Fred could gauge what kind of mood the boss was in that day. If his boss was in a bad mood, Fred would keep his list to himself and save it for another day. But if the boss was in a positive and helpful mood, Fred asked every question on his list and got a good answer for every one. Fred often ended up holding his list for five or six weeks until the boss's mood was right. The bad news was that there was often a delay in resolving some important issues, but the good news was that his moody leader rarely bushwhacked Fred.

A Yiddish proverb states, "If you act like an ass, don't get insulted if people ride you." I guess you could say that is what Fred had to do to get along with his inconsistent leader. Consistency isn't easy for anybody. In fact, writer Aldous Huxley said, "Consistency is contrary to nature, contrary to life. The only completely consistent people are the dead."

If you want to be the kind of leader others want to follow—a 360-Degree Leader—then plan to fight the good fight to be consistent so that you are approachable. Even if you care for people, are honest with them, and can perform your job well, unless you are consistent, people will not depend on you, and they will not trust you.

People Follow Leaders They Admire—Leaders with Commitment

I love the story of the farmer who had experienced several bad years and went to see the manager of his bank. "I've got some good news and some bad news to tell you," he told the banker. "Which would you like first?"

"Why don't you tell me the bad news first and get it over with?" the bank manager replied.

"Okay. With the bad drought and inflation and all, I won't be able to pay anything on my mortgage this year; either on the principal or the interest."

"Well, that is pretty bad," responded the banker.

"It gets worse. I also won't be able to pay anything on the loan for all that machinery I bought—not on the principal or interest."

"Wow, that's really bad!"

"It's worse than that," continued the farmer. "You remember I also borrowed to buy seeds and fertilizer and other supplies? Well, I can't pay anything on that either—principal or interest."

"That's awful—and that's enough! Tell me what the good

news is," the banker pleaded.

"The good news," replied the farmer with a smile, "is that I intend to keep on doing business with you."[1]

The joke is corny, but it is true that people admire people who exhibit great commitment. Think of some of the great leaders you admire. When I think of people like Winston Churchill, Martin Luther King Jr., and John Wesley, one of the first qualities that comes to mind is their commitment. They gave everything they had to leading according to their principles.

Several years ago, I coauthored a book called *Becoming a Person of Influence* with Jim Dornan. Many people tell me that of all my books, it is their favorite. Why is that? I believe it's because it's a book on leadership for people without leadership positions. It's especially popular among people involved in network marketing, because their business is entirely influence based. The book is based on an acrostic that I will give you now, because it describes the qualities of an influencer and is easy to remember.

INTEGRITY—builds relationships on trust
NURTURING—cares about people as individuals
FAITH—believes in people
LISTENING—values what others have to say
UNDERSTANDING—sees from their point of view
ENLARGING—helps others become bigger
NAVIGATING—assists others through difficulties
CONNECTING—initiates positive relationships
EMPOWERING—gives them the power to lead

If you work hard to do all of these things with the people in your organization, you will overcome the Influence Challenge. The whole secret is to think *influence*, not *position*. That's what leadership is all about. If you begin to practice the qualities of influence, you will be ready to take on one of the toughest tasks of 360-Degree Leaders: leading up. That's the subject of the next section of this book.

Section II Review
The Challenges 360Degree Leaders Face

Here is a brief review of the challenges every leader in the middle faces:

1. The Tension Challenge: The Pressure of Being "Caught in the Middle"
2. The Frustration Challenge: Following an Ineffective Leader
3. The Multi-Hat Challenge: One Head . . . Many Hats
4. The Ego Challenge: You're Often Hidden in the Middle
5. The Fulfillment Challenge: Leaders Like the Front More Than the Middle 6. The Vision Challenge: Championing the Vision Is More Difficult When You Didn't Create It 7. The Influence Challenge: Leading Others Beyond Your Position Is Not Easy

If these challenges resonate with you, then you know you need to lead better from the middle in order to handle them most effectively. How well do you do that now? One way to measure your ability is to take the 360Degree Leadership assessment, offered free of charge to people who have purchased this book. Go to 360DegreeLeader.com for more information.

SECTION III

THE PRINCIPLES 360-DEGREE LEADERS PRACTICE TO LEAD UP

"Follow me, I'm right behind you."

If you are trying to make an impact from the middle of an organization, then you probably relate to the myths and challenges outlined in the previous two sections of the book. More than likely you have to deal with one or more of them every day. So how do you make the best of your situation while overcoming the challenges and avoiding the myths? You develop the ability to be a 360-Degree Leader by learning to lead up (with your leader), lead across (with your colleagues), and lead down (with your followers). Each of these draws on different principles and requires different skills.

"If you want to get ahead, leading up is much better than kissing up."
—DAN REILAND

Leading up is the 360-Degree Leader's greatest challenge. Most leaders want to lead, not be led. But most leaders also want to have value added to them. If you take the approach of wanting to add value to those above you, you have the best

chance of influencing them. Dan Reiland said as we talked over ideas for this book: "If you want to get ahead, leading up is much better than kissing up."

In the fall of 2004, I got a glimpse of a world that was totally new to me. At "Exchange," an event for executives that I host every year, I invited the attendees to experience a presentation by noted Boston Philharmonic conductor Benjamin Zander along with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. It was an interactive leadership experience where we got to sit in among the musicians of the orchestra as they rehearsed, and the conductor gave us insights into communication, leadership, and followership within a world-class team of artists. It was incredible.

That experience prompted me to read the book Zander wrote with his wife, Rosamund Stone Zander, called *The Art of Possibility*. In it, they tell a story that wonderfully illustrates the value of leading up and how it can add value to a leader and an organization. Benjamin Zander wrote:

> One of the most supremely gifted and accomplished artists I have known sat for decades as a modest member of the viola section of one of America's leading orchestras. Eugene Lehner had been the violist of the legendary Kolisch Quartet, and had coached the distinguished Juilliard String Quartet as well as innumerable other ensembles . . . How often I have consulted him on thorny points of interpretation—to have the scales removed from my eyes by his incandescent insight into the music![1]

Zander went on to say that he wondered if any of the other conductors—who have a notorious reputation for being egoists—had consulted him and drawn on his immense knowledge and experience as an artist and leader. Following is

Lehner's response:

> One day, during my very first year playing with the orchestra, I remember an occasion when Koussevitsky was conducting a Bach piece and he seemed to be having some difficulty getting the results he wanted —it simply wasn't going right. Fortunately, his friend, the great French pedagogue and conductor Nadia Boulanger, happened to be in town and sitting in on the rehearsal, so Koussevitsky took the opportunity to extricate himself from an awkward and embarrassing situation by calling out to her, "Nadia, please, will you come up here and conduct? I want to go to the back of the hall to see how it sounds." Mademoiselle Boulanger stepped up, made a few comments to the musicians, and conducted the orchestra through the passage without a hitch. Ever since that time, in every rehearsal, I have been waiting for the conductor to say, "Lehrer, you come up here and conduct, I want to go to the back of the hall to hear how it sounds." It is now forty-three years since this happened, and it is less and less likely that I will be asked.[2]

I'm sure you don't want to wait forty-three years for an opportunity to lead up. You want to be a person of influence beginning today.

Influencing your leader isn't something you can make happen in a day. In fact, since you have no control over the people above you on the organizational chart, they may refuse to be influenced by you or anyone under their authority. So there's a possibility that you may never be able to lead up with them. But you can greatly increase the odds of success if you practice the principles in this section of the book. Your underlying strategy should be to support your leader, add value to the organization, and distinguish yourself from the rest of the pack by doing your work with excellence. If you do these things consistently, then in time the leader above you may learn to trust you, rely on you, and look to you for advice.

With each step, your influence will increase, and you will have more and more opportunities to lead up.

Lead-Up Principle #1

LEAD YOURSELF EXCEPTIONALLY WELL

Every now and then at a conference, sharp young kids will come up to me and tell me how much they want to become great leaders and how hard they're working to learn and grow. But then they'll lament, "I don't have anyone to lead yet."

My response is to tell them, "Lead yourself. That's where it all starts. Besides, if you wouldn't follow yourself, why should anyone else?"

Have you ever worked with people who didn't lead themselves well? Worse, have you ever worked for people in leadership positions who couldn't lead themselves? What do they do other than set a bad example? They're like the crow in a fable I once read. The crow was sitting in a tree, doing nothing all day. A small rabbit saw the crow and asked him, "Can I also sit like you and do nothing all day long?"

"Sure," answered the crow, "why not?" So the rabbit sat on the ground below the crow, following his example. All of a sudden a fox appeared, pounced on the rabbit, and ate him.

The tongue-in-cheek moral of the story is that if you're going to sit around doing nothing all day, you had better be sitting very high up. But if you are down where the action is, you can't afford to be sitting around doing nothing. The key to leading yourself well is to learn self-management. I have

observed that most people put too much emphasis on decision making and too little on decision managing. As a result, they lack focus, discipline, intentionality, and purpose.

I believe this so firmly that I wrote an entire book on it called *Today Matters*. The thesis of the book is that successful people make right decisions early and manage those decisions daily. We often think that self-leadership is about making good decisions every day, when the reality is that we need to make a few critical decisions in major areas of life and then manage those decisions day to day.

Here's a classic example of what I mean. Have you ever made a New Year's resolution to exercise? You probably already believe that exercise is important. Making a decision to do it isn't that hard, but managing that decision—and following through—is much more difficult. Let's say, for example, that you sign up for a health club membership the first week of January. When you sign on, you're excited. But the first time you show up at the gym, there's a mob of people. There are so many cars that police are directing traffic. You drive around for fifteen minutes, and finally find a parking place—four blocks away. But that's okay; you're there for exercise anyway, so you walk to the gym.

Then when you get inside the building, you have to wait to even get into the locker room to change. But you think, *That's okay. I want to get into shape. This is going to be great.* You think that until you finally get dressed and discover all the machines are being used. Once again you have to wait. Finally, you get on a machine—it's not the one you really wanted, but hey, you'll take it—and you exercise for twenty minutes. When you see the line for the shower, you decide to skip it, take your

clothes, and just change at home.

The key to leading yourself well is to learn self-management.

On your way out, you see the manager of the club, and you decide to complain about the crowds. She says, "Don't worry about it. Come back in three weeks, and you can have the closest parking place and your choice of machines. Because by then, 98 percent of the people who signed up will have dropped out!"

It's one thing to decide to exercise. It's another to actually follow through with it. As everyone else drops out, you will have to decide whether you will quit like everyone else or if you will stick with it. And that takes self-management.

Nothing will make a better impression on your leader than your ability to manage yourself. If your leader must continually expend energy managing you, then you will be perceived as someone who drains time and energy. If you manage yourself well, however, your boss will see you as someone who maximizes opportunities and leverages personal strengths. That will make you someone your leader turns to when the heat is on.

WHAT A LEADER MUST SELF-MANAGE

In *Today Matters* I reference the dozen things that people who desire to be successful should do. But here I want to focus on leadership alone.

So if you want to gain credibility with your boss and others, focus on taking care of business in these seven areas:

1. Manage Your Emotions

I once heard that people with emotional problems are 144 percent more likely to have auto accidents than those who don't have them. The same study evidently found that one out of five victims of fatal accidents had been in a quarrel with another person in the six hours preceding the accident.

It's important for everybody to manage emotions. Nobody likes to spend time around an emotional time bomb who may "go off" at any moment. But it's especially critical for leaders to control their emotions because whatever they do affects many other people.

Good leaders know when to display emotions and when to delay them. Sometimes they show them so that their people can feel what they're feeling. It stirs them up. Is that manipulative? I don't think so, as long as the leaders are doing it for the good of the team and not for their own gain. Because leaders see more than others and ahead of others, they often experience the emotions first. By letting the team know what you're feeling, you're helping them to see what you're seeing.

Good leaders know when to display emotions and when to delay them.

Other times leaders have to hold their feelings in check. In his book *American Soldier,* Gen. Tommy Franks wrote about a devastating incident that occurred in Vietnam when he was a

junior officer and the example that was set for him in this area by Lt. Col. Eric Antilla, who put the men he commanded ahead of his own emotional needs:

> I studied Eric Antilla's eyes. I knew he was gripped by anguish, but he never let it show. We were at war; he was commanding troops in combat. And his quiet resolve in meeting this catastrophe gave us all strength. In an hour he would grieve, but now he stood rock solid. In war, it is necessary that commanders be able to delay their emotions until they can afford them.[1]

When I say that leaders should delay their emotions, I'm not suggesting that they deny them or bury them. The bottom line in managing your emotions is that you should put others—not yourself—first in how you handle and process them. Whether you delay or display your emotions should not be for your own gratification. You should ask yourself, *What does the team need?* not, *What will make me feel better?*

2. Manage Your Time

Time management issues are especially tough for people in the middle. Leaders at the top can delegate. Workers at the bottom usually punch a time clock. They get paid an hourly wage, and they do what they can while they're on the clock. Middle leaders, meanwhile, feel the Tension Challenge, and they are encouraged—and are often expected—to put in long hours to get work done.

Time is valuable. Psychiatrist and author M. Scott Peck said, "Until you value yourself, you won't value your time. Until you value your time, you will not do anything with it." In *What to*

Do Between Birth and Death (Wm. Morrow & Co., 1992), Charles Spezzano says that people don't pay for things with money; they pay for them with time. If you say to yourself, *In five years, I'll have put enough away to buy that vacation house*, then what you are really saying is that the house will cost you five years—one-twelfth of your adult life. "The phrase *spending your time* is not a metaphor," said Spezzano. "It's how life works."

"Until you value yourself, you won't value your time."
—M. SCOTT PECK

Instead of thinking about what you do and what you buy in terms of money, instead think about them in terms of time. Think about it. What is worth spending your life on? Seeing your work in that light just may change the way you manage your time.

3. MANAGE YOUR PRIORITIES

The best 360-Degree Leaders are generalists. They know a lot about a lot of things. They often have no choice because of the Multi-Hat Challenge. But at the same time, the old proverb is true: If you chase two rabbits, both will escape.

What is a leader in the middle to do? Since you are not the top leader, you don't have control over your list of responsibilities or your schedule. You should still try to get yourself to the point where you can manage your priorities and focus your time in this way:

80 percent of the time—work where you are strongest
15 percent of the time—work where you are learning
5 percent of the time—work in other necessary areas

This may not be easy to achieve, but it is what you should strive for. If you have people working for you, try to give them the things you aren't good at but they are. Or if possible, trade some duties with your colleagues so that each of you is playing to your strength. Remember, the only way to move up from the middle is to gradually shift from generalist to specialist, from someone who does many things well to someone who focuses on a few things she does exceptionally well.

The secret to making the shift is often discipline. In *Good to Great*, Jim Collins wrote:

> Most of us lead busy, but undisciplined lives. We have ever-expanding "to do" lists, trying to build momentum by doing, doing, doing—and doing more. And it rarely works. Those who build the good-to-great companies, however, made as much use of "stop doing" lists as the "to do" lists. They displayed a remarkable amount of discipline to unplug all sorts of extraneous junk.[2]

You must be ruthless in your judgment of what you should not do. Just because you like doing something doesn't mean it should stay on your to-do list. If it is a strength, do it. If it helps you grow, do it. If your leader says you must handle it personally, do it. Anything else is a candidate for your "stop doing" list.

4. MANAGE YOUR ENERGY

Some people have to ration their energy so that they don't run out. Up until a few years ago, that wasn't me. When people asked me how I got so much done, my answer was always, "High energy, low IQ." From the time I was a kid, I was always on the go. I was six years old before I realized my name wasn't "Settle Down."

Now that I'm fifty-eight, I do have to pay attention to my energy level. In *Thinking for a Change*, I shared one of my strategies for managing my energy. When I look at my calendar every morning, I ask myself, *What is the main event?* That is the one thing to which I cannot afford to give anything less than my best. That one thing can be for my family, my employees, a friend, my publisher, the sponsor of a speaking engagement, or my writing time. I always make sure I have the energy to do it with focus and excellence.

The greatest enemy of good thinking is busyness.

Even people with high energy can have that energy sucked right out of them under difficult circumstances. I've observed that leaders in the middle of an organization often have to deal with what I call "the ABCs energy-drain."

Activity Without Direction—doing things that don't seem to matter

Burden Without Action—not being able to do things that really matter

Conflict Without Resolution—not being able to deal with what's the matter

If you find that you are in an organization where you often must deal with these ABCs, then you will have to work extra hard to manage your energy well. Either that or you need to look for a new place to work.

5. Manage Your Thinking

Poet and novelist James Joyce said, "Your mind will give back to you exactly what you put into it." The greatest enemy of good thinking is busyness. And middle leaders are usually the busiest people in an organization. If you find that the pace of life is too demanding for you to stop and think during your workday, then get into the habit of jotting down the three or four things that need good mental processing or planning that you can't stop to think about. Then carve out some time later when you can give those items some good think-time. That may be thirty minutes at home the same day, or you may want to keep a running list for a whole week and then take a couple of hours on Saturday. Just don't let the list get so long that it disheartens or intimidates you.

I encouraged readers in *Thinking for a Change* to have a place to think, and I wrote about the "thinking chair" I have in my office. I don't use that chair for anything else other than my think-time. I've discovered since the book's publication that I didn't explain clearly enough how to correctly use the thinking chair. People at conferences told me that they sat in their own thinking chairs and nothing happened. I explain to them that I don't sit in that thinking chair without an agenda, just hoping that a good idea hits me. What I usually do is think about the things I've jotted down because I couldn't think about them

during a busy day. I take the list to my chair, put it in front of me, and give each item as much think-time as it needs. Sometimes I'm evaluating a decision I've already made. Sometimes I'm thinking through a decision I will have to make. Sometimes I'm developing a strategy. Other times I'm trying to be creative in fleshing out an idea.

A minute of thinking is often more valuable than an hour of talk or unplanned work.

I want to encourage you to try managing your thinking in this way. If you've never done it before, you will be amazed by the payoff. And know this: 1 minute > 1 hour. A minute of thinking is often more valuable than an hour of talk or unplanned work.

6. MANAGE YOUR WORDS

Legendary basketball coach John Wooden said, "Show me what you can do; don't just tell me what you can do." I think just about every leader has said—or at least thought—those words at some time or another when dealing with an employee. Leaders value action. And if they are going to stop what they're doing long enough to listen, the words they hear need to have value. Make them count.

In *The Forbes Scrapbook of Thoughts on the Business Life* (Triumph Books, 1995), Emile de Girardin is quoted as saying, "The power of words is immense. A well-chosen word has often sufficed to stop a flying army, to change defeat into victory, and to save an empire." If you wish to make sure that

your words carry weight, then weigh them well. The good news is that if you manage your thinking and take advantage of focused think-time, you will probably see improvement in the area of managing your words too.

David McKinley, a 360-Degree Leader in a large organization in Plano, Texas, told me a story about something that happened in his first job after graduate school. He was preparing to make an important call on someone, and he decided that he should ask the top leader to go with him. When they got there, David, in his enthusiasm, just wouldn't stop talking. He didn't give his leader a chance to do anything but watch until the very end of their visit.

As they returned to the car, David's boss told him, "I might as well have stayed at the office." He went on to explain how his presence was superfluous. David told me, "I learned a huge lesson that day about staying 'in bounds' when I was with the senior leader. His honest counsel and correction strengthened our relationship and has served me well throughout my life." If you have something worthwhile to say, say it briefly and well. If you don't, sometimes the best thing to do is remain silent.

7. MANAGE YOUR PERSONAL LIFE

You can do everything right at work and manage yourself well there, but if your personal life is a mess, it will eventually turn everything else sour. What would it profit a leader to climb to the top of the organizational chart but to lose a marriage or alienate the children? As someone who spent many years counseling people, I can tell you, no career success is worth it.

Success is having those closest to me love and respect me the most.

For years one of my definitions of *success* has been this: having those closest to me love and respect me the most. That is what is most important. I want the love and respect of my wife, my children, and my grandchildren before I want the respect of anyone I work with. Don't get me wrong. I want the people who work with me to respect me too, but not at the expense of my family. If I blow managing myself at home, then the negative impact will spill over into every area of my life, including work.

If you want to lead up, you must always lead yourself first. If you can't, you have no credibility. I've found the following to be true:

If I can't lead myself, others won't follow me.
If I can't lead myself, others won't respect me.
If I can't lead myself, others won't partner with me.

That applies whether the influence you desire to exert is on the people above you, beside you, or below you. The better you are at making sure you're doing what you should be doing, the better chance you have for making an impact on others.

Lead-Up Principle #2

LIGHTEN YOUR LEADER'S LOAD

You've probably heard the saying, "Pass the buck," meaning to duck ownership or shirk responsibility. One source says that the expression comes from when card games were played in the old West, and a Buck knife was used to indicate who was to deal the cards next. If someone didn't want to deal, he could pass the Buck.

When Harry Truman was president of the United States, he used to keep a sign on his desk that said, "The Buck Stops Here." By that he meant that no matter how many people might avoid taking responsibility up and down the chain of command, he would take responsibility. In an address at the National War College on December 19, 1952, Truman said, "You know, it's easy for the Monday morning quarterback to say what the coach should have done, after the game is over. But when the decision is up before you—and on my desk I have a motto which says 'The Buck Stops Here'—the decision has to be made." On another occasion he said, "The president—whoever he is—has to decide. He can't pass the buck to anybody. No one else can do the deciding for him. That's his job."[1]

Responsibility weighs heavily on leaders. The higher they are in an organization, the heavier the responsibility. As president of the United States, Truman carried the weight of

the entire nation on his shoulders. Leaders can give up many things. They can delegate many things. The one thing that the top leader can never let go of is final responsibility.

How Lifting Your Leader Lifts You

As an employee, you can do one of two things for your leader. You can make the load lighter, or you can make it heavier. It's similar to the Elevator Principle in *Winning with People*: "We can lift people up or take people down in our relationships." If you help lift the load, then you help your leader succeed. When the boss succeeds, the organization succeeds. Conversely, it is almost impossible for you to win if your boss fails.

Leaders can give up many things. They can delegate many things. The one thing that the top leader can never let go of is final responsibility.

I should mention that motives do matter when it comes to lifting your leader's load. I'm recommending that you lift up, not suck up. That's not to say that people who are nice to the boss and hope it helps their careers have bad motives or poor character. They have just misplaced their energies. And a good leader can tell the difference between someone who really wants to help and someone who is trying to curry favor.

There are many positive benefits that can come from helping to lift your leader's load. Following are a few of those benefits.

Lifting Shows You Are a Team Player

When I think of the consummate team player, I think of Kirk Nowery, the president of Injoy Stewardship Services. When Kirk first began with ISS, he was one of our "road warriors." He consulted with churches and also presented information about ISS and its services to pastors and their lay leaders. But every time I saw Kirk, he used to ask me the same question: "John, is there anything I can do for you?" It was his way of letting me know that he was a team player, willing to do whatever it took for ISS to succeed. Now that Kirk is running the company, he still asks me that question whenever we meet. And if I ask him to do anything, whether it's to accomplish a big company goal or help me with something personal, he completes the task with excellence.

Lifting Shows Gratitude for Being on the Team

A Chinese proverb says, "Those who drink the water must remember those who dug the well." Gratitude is one of the most attractive of all personal attributes; sometimes I think it is one of the least practiced. But I have to say that the people I work with are not remiss in this area. I find them to be very grateful. They continually show their gratitude by lifting my load and taking things off of my shoulders; and because they take good care of me, I try to take good care of them.

Lifting Makes You Part of Something Bigger

In February 2005, a few members of the EQUIP staff, several volunteer leadership trainers, and some current and potential donors made a trip to Europe to launch the Million Leaders Mandate there. It was an amazing experience as we met with national leaders in the United Kingdom, Germany, Ukraine, and Russia.

When you help someone bigger than you, it makes you part of something bigger.

We covered a lot of territory in ten days. Often we flew into a country in the morning, took in some sights in the afternoon, and met with key leaders in the evening or the next day. As we rushed from place to place and traveled together on buses from airport to hotel to meeting hall, Doug Carter, the vice president of EQUIP, continually reminded everyone of the vision of EQUIP and the Million Leaders Mandate—to train and equip a million people on six continents for spiritual leadership.

Doug is a good leader. He was reminding us that what we were doing was a part of something bigger than the events of the moment. It's the truth that when you help someone bigger than you, it makes you part of something bigger. Doesn't just about everyone desire to be part of something significant? There is also another benefit to being part of something bigger; it makes you bigger. You cannot contribute to something significant without being changed. If you want to be better than you are, become part of something bigger than you are.

LIFTING GETS YOU NOTICED

When you lift people up, they can't help but notice it. Even if others aren't aware of what you're doing, the person being lifted is. Of course, lifting others isn't meant to be a one-time occurrence. You can't add value to people by helping them once. It needs to be an ongoing process if you want the value you add to come back to you.

How Often You Lift	How the Leader Responds
Once or twice	"Thanks."
Many times	"I need you."
Continually	"Let me help you."

If you continually help others, then others will eventually want to help you. Even if the leader you work for never turns around to lift you up in return, someone who has seen you doing that lifting will extend a hand to you. Just remember: *It's not how heavy the load is. It's how you carry it.*

Lifting Increases Your Value and Influence

Do you have a friend or family member who always makes things better for you, who seems to add value to you every time you are together? If you do, I bet that person has a special place in your heart. Likewise, load lifters have a special place in the hearts of their leaders.

From the perspective of the top leader, the question that must be asked is, "Am I better off with them on the team?" That's really the bottom line for a leader. If you make your leaders feel that they are better off because you are part of the team, then your value goes up, and so does your influence. I

ask myself that question about two years after hiring someone. I'm naturally optimistic, so it takes that long for my enthusiasm for them to be tempered enough for me to look at their performance realistically. Other leaders could perhaps make a fair assessment sooner than that, though I also recommend that pessimists wait two years (to get over their skepticism).

The lift you give for the leader often leads to the leader lifting you.

When you lift a leader's load, your load certainly gets heavier. You're taking on more when leading in the middle is already difficult. Know, however, that the lift you give for the leader often leads to the leader lifting you.

How to Lift Your Leader's Load

As you read about the various ways that lifting your leader's load can help you, perhaps several ways you could help came to mind. I recommend that you go with your instincts. But just in case you aren't sure of where to begin, please allow me to give you several suggestions.

1. Do Your Own Job Well First

Hall of Fame baseball player Willie Mays said, "It isn't hard to be good from time to time in sports. What's tough is being good every day." When you are good every day, you do the first important step in lifting your leader's load—you prevent

him from having to lift yours.

I once had an employee who continually told me that he wanted to help me. At first, I thought, *What a great attitude!* But then I began to notice something. Despite his constant requests to help, he never seemed to get his own work done. After seeing that this was a pattern, I sat him down and told him that the best way he could help me was to do his job. But guess what? He kept asking to help me but didn't follow through and get his own job done. I finally concluded that what he wanted was to spend time with me, not help me. In time, I had to let him go.

2. When You Find a Problem, Provide a Solution

I love the *Peanuts* comic strip in which Lucy walks up to Charlie Brown, who is leaning against a wall with his head in his hands. She looks at him and says, "Discouraged again, eh, Charlie Brown?"

"You know what your trouble is?" she asks when he doesn't respond. "The whole trouble with you is that you are you!"

"It isn't hard to be good from time to time in sports. What's tough is being good every day."
—Willie Mays

"Well, what in the world can I do about that?" he responds in exasperation.

Lucy answers, "I don't pretend to be able to give advice. I merely point out the trouble."

Load lifters don't follow the path of Lucy. They are more like Henry Ford, who said, "Don't find a fault; find a remedy."

In an organization I led many years ago, I seemed to have a whole bunch of "Lucys" working for me, who seemed to continually dump problems on my desk and then go away to look for more problems. I instituted a rule. Anyone who brought a problem to me wanting help with it had to also come up with three potential solutions before coming to see me. Did I do that because I didn't want to help them? No, I did it because I wanted them to learn to help themselves. They quickly became creative and resourceful. As time went by, they needed less help and became better decision makers and leaders.

3. TELL LEADERS WHAT THEY *NEED* TO HEAR, NOT WHAT THEY *WANT* TO HEAR

Because of their intuition, good leaders often see more than others see, and they see things before others do. Why? Because they see everything from a leadership bias. But if the organization they lead gets large, they often lose their edge. They become disconnected. What is the remedy to this problem? They ask the people in their inner circle to see things for them.

"Very few big executives want to be surrounded by 'yes' men."

—BURTON BIGELOW

Most good leaders want the perspective of people they trust. Sales expert Burton Bigelow said, "Very few big

executives want to be surrounded by 'yes' men. Their greatest weakness often is the fact that 'yes' men build up around the executive a wall of fiction, when what the executive wants most of all is plain facts."

One of the ways to become a person whom leaders trust is to tell them the truth. One of the biggest load lifters in my life is Linda Eggers, my assistant. Every time I meet with Linda, I ask her to keep me on track. And believe me, I trust her in everything. Having Linda work with me is like possessing an extra brain!

Early on in our working relationship, I asked Linda to always be up front with me when it came to bad news. I didn't want her to talk around issues or try to spare my feelings. If I'm going to get bad news, I want it straight and right away. My promise to Linda, in return, was to never shoot the messenger. If you were to talk to Linda, I believe she would confirm that I have kept that promise.

If you've never spoken up to your leaders and told them what they need to hear, then it will take courage. As World War II general and later president Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "A bold heart is half the battle." But if you are willing to speak up, you can help your leaders and yourself. Start small and be diplomatic. If your leader is receptive, become more frank over time. If you get to the point where your leader is not only willing to hear from you but actually wants your perspective, then remember this: Your job is to be a funnel, not a filter. Be careful to convey information without "spinning" it. Good leaders want the truth—even if it hurts.

4. Go the Second Mile

Motivational sales expert Zig Ziglar said, "There are no traffic jams on the extra mile." When you do more than is asked, you will certainly stand out from the crowd. When you have a whatever-it-takes attitude related to helping the organization, then you can emerge as a go-to player. (I address this in greater depth in Chapter 8 of this section.) People who emerge from the crowd often become members of a leader's inner circle. Leaders expect more from their inner circle. They come to expect a second-mile mind-set from them. They expect extra effort, extra responsibility, and extra thinking. But the good leaders also give extra in return.

"There are no traffic jams on the extra mile."
—Zig Ziglar

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5. Stand Up for Your Leader Whenever You Can

Helping your leaders means supporting them and standing up for them whenever you can. Former army general and U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell said, "When we are debating an issue, loyalty means giving me your honest opinion, whether you think I'll like it or not. Disagreement, at this stage, stimulates me. But once a decision has been made, the debate ends. From that point on, loyalty means executing the decision as if it were your own."

6. Stand In for Your Leader Whenever You Can

Every employee in an organization is a representative of that organization. And individuals at all levels also represent the leaders they work for. Accordingly, they can choose to step up and stand in for their leaders, representing them well and serving the organization.

Years ago, I used to tell new leaders I hired that every person in our organization walked around with two buckets. One bucket contained water, and the other gasoline. As leaders, they would continually come across small fires, and they could pour water or gasoline on a fire. It was their choice.

7. Ask Your Leader How You Can Lift the Load

It's good to anticipate what your leader may need or want. It's even better to come right out and ask. If you are doing your own job and doing it well, chances are your leader will be glad to tell you how you can help.

Over the years as I have worked as a consultant and speaker, I have discovered that there are two approaches that people in those industries take. One type of consultant walks into an organization and says, "Here's what I know; sit down and listen." Another says, "What do I need to know? We'll work on this together." Likewise, some speakers arrive at an engagement with the idea that it's their moment to be in the spotlight, and they are quick to tell you what you can do to help them. Other speakers recognize that it's their moment to

add value to the leader who invited them.

As I have grown in maturity and experience, I have tried to become like the communicators in that second group. Like many leaders early in their lives, I started out focusing on myself. But in time I came to recognize that when I am invited to speak, I am there to serve the leaders who invited me. I want to add value to them, to lift their load if I can. To do that, I ask them three things:

- "Can I say something that you *have said* before to give you another voice?"
- "Can I say something that you *would like to say but can't,* to give you a needed voice?"
- "Can I say something that you *haven't said yet* to give you the first voice?"

Most of the time, the good leaders say yes to those requests. They are always thinking ahead, thinking about where to take the organization and how they will get there. When someone asks how he can help, they are delighted. All it takes is for someone to ask.

Lead-Up Principle #3

BE WILLING TO DO WHAT OTHERS WON'T

Successful people do the things
that unsuccessful people are
unwilling to do.
—JOHN C. MAXWELL

It's said that an aid group in South Africa once wrote to missionary and explorer David Livingstone asking, "Have you found a good road to where you are? If so, we want to know how to send other men to join you."

Livingstone replied, "If you have men who will come only if they know there is a good road, I don't want them. I want men who will come even if there is no road at all." That's what top leaders want from the people working for them: they want individuals who are willing to do what others won't.

Few things gain the appreciation of a top leader more quickly than an employee with a whatever-it-takes attitude.

Few things gain the appreciation of a top leader more quickly than an employee with a whatever-it-takes attitude. That is what 360-Degree Leaders must have. They must be willing and able to think outside of their job description, to be willing to

tackle the kinds of jobs that others are too proud or too frightened to take on. These things are what often elevate 360-Degree Leaders above their peers. And remember, being noticed is one of the first steps to influencing the person above you.

WHAT IT MEANS TO DO WHAT OTHERS WON'T

Perhaps you already possess a whatever-it-takes mind-set, and if a task is honest, ethical, and beneficial, you're willing to take it on. If so, good for you! Now all you need is to know how to direct that attitude into action so that you're doing the things that will make the greatest impact and create influence with others. Here are the top ten things I recommend you do to be a 360-Degree Leader who leads up:

1. 360-DEGREE LEADERS TAKE THE TOUGH JOBS

The ability to accomplish difficult tasks earns others' respect very quickly. In *Developing the Leader Within You* , I point out that one of the quickest ways to gain leadership is problem solving.

> Problems continually occur at work, at home, and in life in general. My observation is that people don't like problems, weary of them quickly, and will do almost anything to get away from them. This climate makes others place the reins of leadership into your hands—if you are willing and able to either tackle their problems or train them to solve them. Your problem-solving skills will always be needed because people always have problems.[1]

You learn resiliency and tenacity during tough assignments, not easy ones. When tough choices have to be made and results are difficult to achieve, leaders are forged.

Not only does taking on tough jobs earn you respect, but it also helps you become a better leader. You learn resiliency and tenacity during tough assignments, not easy ones. When tough choices have to be made and results are difficult to achieve, leaders are forged.

2. 360-Degree Leaders Pay Their Dues

Former U.S. senator Sam Nunn said, "You have to pay the price. You will find that everything in life exacts a price, and you will have to decide whether the price is worth the prize." To become a 360-Degree Leader, you will have to pay a price. You will have to give up other opportunities in order to lead. You will have to sacrifice some personal goals for the sake of others. You will have to get out of your comfort zone and do things you've never done before. You will have to keep learning and growing when you don't feel like it. You will have to repeatedly put others ahead of yourself. And if you desire to be a really good leader, you will have to do these things without fanfare or complaint. But remember, as NFL legend George Halas said, "Nobody who ever gave their best ever regretted it."

3. 360-Degree Leaders Work in Obscurity

I think very highly of the importance of leadership. I guess that's obvious for a guy whose motto is "Everything rises and falls on leadership." Occasionally someone will ask me about how ego fits into the leadership equation. They'll want to know what keeps a leader from having a huge ego. I think the answer lies in each leader's pathway to leadership. If people paid their dues and gave their best in obscurity, ego is usually not a problem.

One of my favorite examples of this occurred in the life of Moses in the Old Testament. Though born a Hebrew, he lived a life of privilege in the palace of Egypt until he was forty years old. But after killing an Egyptian, he was exiled to the desert for forty years. There God used him as a shepherd and father, and after four decades of faithful service in obscurity, Moses was called to leadership. Scripture says by that time he was the most humble man in the world. Bill Purvis, the senior pastor of a large church in Columbus, Georgia, said, "If you do what you can, with what you have, where you are, then God won't leave you where you are, and He will increase what you have."

English novelist and poet Emily Bronte said, "If I could I would always work in silence and obscurity, and let my efforts be known by their results." Not everyone wants to be out of the spotlight as she did. But it's important for a leader to learn to work in obscurity because it is a test of personal integrity. The key is being willing to do something because it matters, not because it will get you noticed.

4. 360-Degree Leaders Succeed with Difficult

PEOPLE

People working at the bottom of an organization usually have no choice concerning whom they work with. As a result, they often have to work with difficult people. In contrast, people at the top almost never have to work with difficult people because they get to choose who they work with. If someone they work with becomes difficult, they often let that person go or move him or her out.

For leaders in the middle, the road is different. They have some choice in the matter, but not complete control. They may not be able to get rid of difficult people, but they can often avoid working with them. But good leaders—ones who learn to lead up, across, and down—find a way to succeed with people who are hard to work with. Why do they do it? Because it benefits the organization. How do they do it? They work at finding common ground and connect with them. And instead of putting these difficult people in their place, they try to put themselves in their place.

You don't have the right to put the organization on the line . . . If you are going to take a risk, you need to put yourself on the line.

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5. 360-DEGREE LEADERS PUT THEMSELVES ON THE LINE

I mentioned previously that if you want to lead up, you must distinguish yourself from your colleagues. How do you do that, especially while paying your dues or working in

obscurity? One way is to take a risk. You cannot play it safe and stand out at the same time.

Here's the tricky thing about taking risks in the middle of the organization. You should never be casual about risking what's not yours. I call that "betting with other people's money." You don't have the right to put the organization on the line. Nor would it be right for you to create high risk for others in the organization. If you are going to take a risk, you need to put *yourself* on the line. Play it smart, but don't play it safe.

6. 360-Degree Leaders Admit Faults but Never Make Excuses

It's easier to move from failure to success than from excuses to success. And you will have greater credibility with your leader if you admit your shortcomings and refrain from making excuses. I guarantee that. Of course, that doesn't mean you don't need to produce results. Baseball coach and tutor McDonald Valentine said, "The higher the level you play, the less they accept excuses."

It's easier to move from failure to success than from excuses to success.

The middle of the organization is a good place to discover your identity and work things out. You can discover your leadership strengths there. If you fall short in an area, you can work to overcome your mistakes. If you keep falling short in the same way, you may learn how to overcome an obstacle, or you may discover an area of weakness where you will need to

collaborate with others. But no matter what, don't make excuses. Steven Brown, president of the Fortune Group, summed up this issue: "Essentially there are two actions in life: Performance and excuses. Make a decision as to which you will accept from yourself."

7. 360-Degree Leaders Do More than Expected

Expectations are high for people at the top. And, unfortunately, in many organizations the expectations for people at the bottom are low. But expectations are mixed in the middle. So if you do more than is expected of you, you stand out, and often there can be wonderful, serendipitous results.

When Chris Hodges, a senior pastor who is a donor and volunteer trainer with EQUIP, was working as a staff member at a large church in Baton Rouge, his boss, Larry Stockstill, had the opportunity to become the host of a live television show. Chris had no responsibilities related to the show, and was, in fact, rather low in the organization's hierarchy. But he knew that the show was important to Larry, so Chris took it upon himself to go down to the studio to see the first taping. As it turned out, he was the only staff member to do so.

There was great excitement in the studio as the hour of the first broadcast approached. That excitement quickly turned to panic when the guest who was scheduled to appear on the show called in to say he was having a problem getting there. The guest wasn't worried, because he thought they could just start the taping later. What he didn't realize was that the show

was scheduled to go on the air live!

In that moment, Larry looked around, saw Chris, and said, "You're going to be my guest today." The crew scrambled, put a microphone on Chris, slapped some makeup on his face, and sat him down in the chair next to Larry. Then to Chris's great shock, when the lights turned on and the cameras started rolling, Larry introduced Chris as his cohost.

Chris ended up being on that show with Larry every week for two and a half years. The experience changed him forever. Not only did it build his relationship with his leader, but it also made him well-known in the community. More importantly, he learned to think on his feet and become a better communicator, skills that serve him well every day of his life. And it all happened because he decided to do more than was expected of him.

8. 360-Degree Leaders Are the First to Step Up and Help

In *25 Ways to Win with People*, I point out that being the first to help others is a great way to make them feel like a million bucks. It lets them know you care. The kind of influence you gain from helping a peer is also gained with your leader when you step up and help others. Haven't you found the following to be true?

- The first person to volunteer is a hero and is given the "10" treatment.
- The second person is considered a helper and viewed as

only slightly above average.
- The third person, along with everyone after, is seen as a follower and is ignored.

It doesn't matter whom you're helping, whether it's your boss, a peer, or someone working for you. When you help someone on the team, you help the whole team. And when you help the team, you're helping your leaders. And that gives them reasons to notice and appreciate you.

9. 360-Degree Leaders Perform Tasks That Are "Not Their Job"

Few things are more frustrating for a leader than having someone refuse to do a task because it is "not his job." (In moments like those, most of the top leaders I know are tempted to invite such people to be without a job altogether!) Good leaders don't think in those terms. They understand the Law of the Big Picture from *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*: "The goal is more important than the role."

A 360-Degree Leader's goal is to get the job done, to fulfill the vision of the organization and its leader. That often means doing whatever it takes. As a leader "moves up," that more often takes the form of hiring someone to get it done, but leaders in the middle often don't have that option. So instead, they jump in and get it done themselves.

10. 360-Degree Leaders Take Responsibility

FOR THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

I recently saw a cartoon where a dad is reading a book to his little boy at bedtime. The title on the cover of the book says, *The Story of Job*, and the boy has only one question for his father: "Why didn't he sue someone?"

Isn't that the way a lot of people think these days? Their knee-jerk reaction to adversity is to blame someone else. That's not the case with 360-Degree Leaders. They take hold of their responsibilities and follow through with them 100 percent.

Lack of responsibility can be a deal breaker when it comes to the people who work for me. When my employees don't get the job done, certainly I become disappointed. But I'm willing to work with them to help them improve—if they are taking responsibility for themselves. I know they will work at getting better if they take ownership and have teachable spirits. We have no starting point for improvement, however, if they don't get the job done and they fail to take responsibility. In such cases, it's time to move on and find someone else to take their place.

J. C. Penney said, "Unless you are willing to drench yourself in your work beyond the capacity of the average man, you are just not cut out for positions at the top." I'd say that you're not cut out for leadership in the middle either! People who want to be effective are willing to do what others won't. And because of that, their leaders are willing to resource them, promote them, and be influenced by them.

Lead-Up Principle #4

DO MORE THAN MANAGE—LEAD!

People sometimes ask me to explain the difference between management and leadership. Here's my take on it in a nutshell: Managers work with processes—leaders work with people. Both are necessary to make an organization run smoothly, but they have different functions.

To understand what I mean, think about some of the things that must happen on a military ship for it to function properly. The ship must be navigated, fueled, and supplied. It has various weapons systems that must be kept in good working order. The routine maintenance on a ship is endless, and there are dozens of processes related to the personnel onboard the ship.

All of these are processes that must be overseen. There are procedures that must be followed, schedules that must be created, inventories that must be maintained. These things will never happen without people to manage them. And if they are not managed, the ship will never be capable of fulfilling its purpose.

So what is the role of leaders? Leaders lead the people who manage the processes. If all the work in an organization were performed by machines, and the processes were monitored and controlled by computers, that organization wouldn't need any

leaders. But *people* do the work and manage the processes, and people don't function like machines. They have feelings. They think. They have problems, hopes, and dreams. Though people can be managed, they would much rather be led. And when they are led, they perform at a much higher level.

I have yet to meet a good leader who wasn't also a good manager. They begin by managing themselves well. Once they do that well, they learn how to manage within their area of expertise. Then they add to that the skills needed to work with and influence others. They learn to understand the dynamics of leadership. As Tom Mullins said, "Leaders must be good managers, but most managers are not necessarily good leaders."

"Leaders must be good managers, but most managers are not necessarily good leaders."
—TOM MULLINS

Leadership is more than management. Leadership is:

- People more than projects
- Movement more than maintenance
- Art more than science
- Intuition more than formula
- Vision more than procedure
- Risk more than caution
- Action more than reaction
- Relationships more than rules
- Who you are more than what you do

If you want to influence others, then you must learn to lead.

Moving Beyond Management

If you are already good at doing your work and managing processes, you're on the road toward leadership. But to move beyond management to leadership, you need to broaden your mind-set and begin thinking like a leader. If you are already leading well, then use this as a checklist to see where you need to keep growing.

1. Leaders Think Longer Term

Many people in organizations don't look ahead. They're like the person who said, "My department has a short-range plan and a long-range plan. Our short-range plan is to stay afloat long enough to start working on our long-range plan." But 360-Degree Leaders focus on more than just the task at hand and see more than just the current moment. They look ahead, whether it be a few hours, a few days, or a few years.

By necessity, managers often have to live in the moment. They are working to keep everything running smoothly. Someone once pointed out that managers are people who do things right, while leaders are people who do the right thing. In other words, leaders have a responsibility to make sure the right things are being done so that the organization will thrive tomorrow as well as today.

Most people evaluate events in their lives according to how they will be personally affected. Leaders think within a broader context.

That requires long-term thinking. While good managers may keep the production line working at low cost and peak efficiency, it would be of no value if that production line was still churning out rotary telephones!

2. LEADERS SEE WITHIN THE LARGER CONTEXT

Most people evaluate events in their lives according to how they will be personally affected. Leaders think within a broader context. They start by asking themselves, *How will this impact my people?* But then they also look at how something will impact those above and beside them. They try to see everything in terms of the entire organization and beyond.

Effective leaders know the answers to the following questions:

- How do I fit in my area or department?
- How do all the departments fit into the organization?
- Where does our organization fit in the market?
- How is our market related to other industries and the economy?

And as industries in our economy become more global, many good leaders are thinking even more broadly!

You don't have to become a global economist to lead

effectively from the middle of your organization. The point is that 360-Degree Leaders see their area as part of the larger process and understand how the pieces of the larger puzzle fit together. If you desire to be a better leader, then broaden your thinking and work at seeing things from a larger perspective.

3. Leaders Push Boundaries

People are trained to follow rules from the time they are kids: *Stand in line. Do your homework. Put your hand up to ask a question.* Most rules are good because they keep us from living in chaos. And most processes are governed by rules. You drop a brick from a second-story window, and you know it's going to fall to the ground. You forget to place the order for office supplies, and you run out of staples. It's simple cause and effect.

Managers often rely on rules to make sure the processes they oversee stay on track. In fact, self-management, which I discussed in Principle #1 of this section, is basically having the discipline to follow through with the rules you set for yourself. But to move beyond management, you have to learn to think outside the box.

Leaders push boundaries. They desire to find a better way. They want to make improvements. They like to see progress. All these things mean making changes, retiring old rules, inventing new procedures. Leaders are constantly asking, "Why do we do it this way?" and saying, "Let's try this." Leaders want to take new territory, and that means crossing boundaries.

4. Leaders Put the Emphasis on Intangibles

The things that people can manage are usually tangible and measurable. They provide concrete evidence. You can logically evaluate them before making decisions.

Leadership is really a game of intangibles. What could be more intangible than influence? Leaders deal with things like morale, motivation, momentum, emotions, attitudes, atmosphere, and timing. How do you measure timing before you do something? How do you put your finger on momentum? It's all very intuitive. To gauge such things, you have to read between the lines. Leaders have to become comfortable—more than that, confident—dealing with such things.

Many times the problems leaders face in organizations are not the real problems. For example, let's say a department is $100,000 over budget at the end of the quarter. Their problem isn't a money problem. The deficit is only evidence of the problem. The real problem may be the morale of the sales force, or the timing of a product launch, or the attitude of the department's leader. A leader needs to learn to focus on such things.

I love the way retired army general Tommy Franks has disciplined himself to look at intangibles and get ready for them. Every day of his career since February 23, 1988, he has approached his work by looking ahead for the day. In the morning, he places a blank three-by-five card near his calendar and writes on one side of it the date and the words "The biggest challenges I may face today." Beneath it he writes the five most important problems he might face. On the back of the

card, he writes, “Opportunities that may appear today,” and lists those.

Franks said, “Every morning since that Thursday in February 1988, I noted the ‘Challenges and Opportunities’ that might occur on that day. More than five thousand cards later, I still do. The card itself isn’t important; preparing myself for each day definitely is.”[1]

5. Leaders Learn to Rely on Intuition

How do leaders learn to work with intangibles? They learn to rely on their intuition. I love what psychologist Joyce Brothers said, “Trust your hunches. They’re usually based on facts filed away just below the conscious level.” The more you focus your attention on intangibles instead of tangibles, on principles instead of practices, the more information you will be filing away for future use, and the sharper your intuition will become. Intuition alone may not be enough to go on, but you should never ignore your intuition.

“Trust your hunches. They’re usually based on facts filed away just below the conscious level.”
—Joyce Brothers

Business professor, consultant, and leadership guru Warren Bennis said, “A part of whole-brain thinking includes learning to trust what Emerson called the ‘blessed impulse,’ the hunch, the vision that shows you in a flash the absolutely right thing to do. Everyone has these visions; leaders learn to trust them.”

6. Leaders Invest Power in Others

Management is often about control. Managers have to control costs, control quality, control efficiency. That's one reason why some good managers have a difficult time making the paradigm shift to leadership. Leading isn't about controlling; it's about releasing.

Good leaders give their power away. They look for good people, and they invest in them to the point where they can be released and empowered to perform. That process is not smooth. It is often messy, and it cannot be controlled. The better the leaders, the more delighted they are to see members of the team finding their own new ways to get things done. And in the case of the best leaders . . . if some of the people outshine the leaders who empowered them, then all the better.

7. Leaders See Themselves as Agents of Change

Psychologist and author Charles Garfield said:

> Peak performers . . . do not see accomplishments as a fixed state, nor as a safe haven in which the individual is moored, completed, finished. Not once have I heard a peak performer speak of an end to challenge, excitement, curiosity, and wonder. Quite the contrary. One of the most engaging characteristics is an infectious talent for moving into the future; generating new challenges, living with a sense of "more work to be done."[2]

The same things can be said of leaders. They don't want things to stay the same. They desire innovation. They love

new challenges. They want more than just seeing progress—they want to help make it happen.

Leadership is a moving target, and it always will be. If you desire to become a better leader, get comfortable with change. And if you want to lead up, learn to think like a leader. Think people, think progress, and think intangibles.

Lead-Up Principle #5

INVEST IN RELATIONAL CHEMISTRY

All good leadership is based on relationships. People won't *go* along with you if they can't *get* along with you. That's true whether you are leading up, across, or down. The key to developing chemistry with your leaders is to develop relationships with them. If you can learn to adapt to your boss's personality while still being yourself and maintaining your integrity, you will be able to lead up.

I often teach leaders that it is their job to connect with the people they lead. In an ideal world, that's the way it should be. The reality is that some leaders do little to connect with the people they lead. As a 360-Degree Leader, you must take it upon yourself to connect not only with the people you lead, but also with the person who leads you. If you want to *lead up,* you must take the responsibility to *connect up*. Here's how to get started.

People won't go *along with you if they can't* get *along with you.*

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1. LISTEN TO YOUR LEADER'S HEARTBEAT

Just as a doctor listens to someone's heartbeat to know that person's physical condition, you need to listen to your

leader's heartbeat to understand what makes him or her tick. That may mean paying attention in informal settings, such as during hallway conversations, at lunch, or in the meeting that often occurs informally before or after a meeting. If you know your leader well and feel the relationship is solid, you may want to be more direct and ask questions about what really matters to him or her on an emotional level.

If you're not sure what to look for, focus on these three areas:

- What makes them laugh? These are the things that give a person great joy.
- What makes them cry? This is what touches a person's heart at a deep emotional level.
- What makes them sing? These are the things that bring deep fulfillment.

All people have dreams, issues, or causes that connect with them. Those things are like the keys to their lives. Think about it from your own point of view for a moment. Are you aware of the things that touch you on a deep emotional level? What are the signs that they "connect" for you? Do you see those signs in your leader? Look for them, and you will likely find them.

Many leaders are very wary about letting the people who work for them see the keys to their heart because they feel it makes them vulnerable. So don't approach it casually, and never treat the subject flippantly. To do so would be a violation of trust. And never try to "turn the key" manipulatively for personal gain.

2. Know Your Leader's Priorities

The heartbeat of leaders is what they *love* to do. The priorities of leaders are what they *have* to do—and by that I mean more than just their to-do lists. All leaders have duties that they must complete or they will fail in fulfilling their responsibility. It's the short list that your boss's boss would say is do-or-die for that position. Make it your goal to learn what those priorities are. The better acquainted you are with those duties or objectives, the better you will understand and communicate with your leader.

3. Catch Your Leader's Enthusiasm

It's much easier to work with someone when you share an enthusiasm. When you and a friend are excited about something, such as a common hobby, don't you often lose track of time when you're engaged in it? You can spend hours talking about it and never grow tired. If you can catch your leader's enthusiasm, it will have a similarly energizing effect. And it will create a bond between you and your leader. If you can share in that enthusiasm, you will pass it on because you will not be able to contain it.

4. Support Your Leader's Vision

When top leaders hear others articulate the vision they have cast for the organization, their hearts sing. It's very rewarding. It represents a kind of tipping point, to use the words of author Malcolm Gladwell. It indicates a level of ownership by others in

the organization that bodes well for the fulfillment of the vision.

Leaders in the middle of the organization who are champions for the vision become elevated in the estimation of a top leader. They get it. They're on board. And they have great value. Each time another person in the organization embraces the vision and passes it on, it's like giving the vision "fresh legs." In other words, when the vision gets handed off, the next person is able to run with it.

Each time another person in the organization embraces the vision and passes it on, it's like giving the vision "fresh legs."

You should never underestimate the power of a verbal endorsement of the vision by a person with influence. The same kind of power can be seen in the business world. For example, I've observed that with most books, the sales that occur during the first six months are due to the marketing, distribution, and promotion done by the publisher (and sometimes the author). After that, the sales are almost entirely a result of word of mouth. If people like the book, they talk about it with others. They are, in essence, passing on the vision of the author and testifying to the value of the book.

As a leader in the middle, if you are unsure about the vision of your leader, then talk to him. Ask questions. Once you think you understand it, quote it back to your leader in situations where it's appropriate to make sure you're in alignment. If you've got it right, you will be able to see it in your leader's face. Then start passing it on to the people in your sphere of influence. It will be good for the organization, your people,

your leader, and you. Promote your leader's dreams, and he will promote you.

> *Promote your leader's dreams, and he will promote you.*

5. Connect with Your Leader's Interests

One of the keys to building relational chemistry is knowing and connecting with the interests of your leader. Have you identified the pet projects that your leader really cares about at work? If so, that's good, but how about her interests outside of work? Can you name them?

It's important to know enough about your leader to be able to relate to him as an individual beyond the job. If your boss is a golfer, you may want to take up the game—or at least learn some things about it. If he collects rare books or porcelain, then spend some time on the Internet finding out about those hobbies. If she builds fine furniture on the weekends, then subscribe to a woodworking magazine. You don't have to take up the hobby yourself or become an expert. Just learn enough to relate to your boss and talk intelligently about the subject.

Leaders sometimes feel isolated and find themselves wondering, *Does anyone else understand?* Though you may not be able to understand your leader's work situation, you can at least understand him or her on some level. When leaders feeling isolated experience a genuine connection with someone "under" them, they often find it very rewarding. And if you feel isolated in the middle, that connection just might be rewarding

for you too.

6. Understand Your Leader's Personality

Two staff members were discussing the president of their company, and one of them said, "You know, you can't help liking the guy."

To which the other replied, "Yeah, if you don't, he fires you."

Leaders are used to having others accommodate their personalities. As you lead down from the middle of the organization, don't you expect others to conform to your personality? I don't mean that in an unreasonable or spiteful way—not that you would fire someone who didn't like you, as in the joke. If you are simply being yourself, you expect the people who work *for* you to work *with* you. But when you are trying to lead up, you are the one who must conform to your leader's personality. It's a rare great leader who conforms down to the people who work for him.

It's wise to understand your leader's style and how your personality type interacts with his. If you study some of the materials designed to reveal personality, such as DISC, Myers-Briggs, and Littuaer's Personality Plus, you will gain greater insight into the way your leader thinks and works. Most of the time, personality opposites get along well as long as their values and goals are similar. Cholerics work well with phlegmatics; sanguines and melancholics appreciate each other's strengths. Trouble can come when people with like personality types come together. If you find that your personality is similar to your boss's, then remember that you're

the one who has to be flexible. That can be a challenge if yours is not a flexible personality type!

7. Earn Your Leader's Trust

When you take time to invest in relational chemistry with your leader, the eventual result will be trust—in other words, relational currency. For years I've taught the concept of relational "change in your pocket." When you do things that add to the relationship, you increase the change in your pocket. When you do negative things, you spend that change. If you keep dropping the ball—professionally or personally—you harm the relationship, and you can eventually spend all the change and bankrupt the relationship.

People with a lot of history who have invested in relational chemistry build up a lot of change. As a result, the relationship can weather many problems or mistakes. For example, Doug Carter, the vice president of EQUIP, is constantly directing me to potential donors for the organization. Doug and I have a lot of relational chemistry. I've known him for a long time, we have worked together for years, and he is an absolute all-star at his job. When he is occasionally mistaken in his assessment of people and asks me to spend a lot of time with someone who is ultimately uninterested in EQUIP, it doesn't harm our relationship; Doug has a tremendous amount of relational currency "in the bank" with me.

"Loyalty publicly results in leverage privately."
—Andy Stanley

Andy Stanley, who is a fantastic 360-Degree Leader, said, "Loyalty publicly results in leverage privately." If you earn your leader's trust over time by giving him public support, then you will gain change with him privately. And you will have opportunities to lead up.

8. Learn to Work with Your Leader's Weaknesses

Sales expert and author Les Giblin said, "You can't make the other fellow feel important in your presence if you secretly feel that he is a nobody." Likewise, you can't build a positive relationship with your boss if you secretly disrespect him because of his weaknesses. Since everybody has blind spots and weak areas, why not learn to work with them? Try to focus on the positives, and work around the negatives. To do anything else will only hurt you.

9. Respect Your Leader's Family

I'm almost reluctant to introduce the concept of family in the context of leading up with someone at work, but I think it bears mentioning. If you do all of the other things I have recommended, but your boss's spouse doesn't like or trust you, the relationship between the two of you will always be strained. You, of course, have no real control over this. The best you can do is to be kind and respectful to your boss's family members and try to connect with them in an appropriate way. Just be aware that if you sense key members of your

boss's family don't like you, even though it may be through no fault of your own, it may lessen your influence and maybe even hinder your career.

The thesis of *Winning with People* is that people can usually trace their successes and failures to the relationships in their lives. The same is true when it comes to leadership. The quality of the relationship you have with your leader will impact your success or failure. It is certainly worth investing in.

Lead-Up Principle #6

BE PREPARED EVERY TIME YOU TAKE YOUR LEADER'S TIME

As I write this chapter, on my desk is a recent issue of *Time* magazine with an article about Bill Gates and the Xbox 360 gaming system that Microsoft has been working on. I'm not a video-game player, so that doesn't hold much personal interest for me. The opening sentences of the article about Gates caught my attention, however, because they highlighted the importance of a leader's time.

> Bill Gates' time is valuable. There are Microsoft employees who wait their whole career to be alone with Gates for 45 minutes. As the richest man in the world and, arguably, the greatest philanthropist in history, at any given moment Gates could and probably should be off feeding the hungry or curing some horrible disease.[1]

Every leader values time. British essayist William Hazlitt wrote, "As we advance in life, we acquire a keener sense of the value of time. Nothing else, indeed, seems of any consequence; and we become misers in this respect." But what makes the time of Gates, a fairly young man, valuable is that he is a leader who could be using his time to do things that can change the lives of thousands of people.

For all leaders, time is precious. Time is the one commodity

that cannot be increased, no matter what a leader does. And it is the necessary component for the leader to do anything. For that reason, you must always be prepared when you take any of your leader's time. Though you may have latitude in how you spend your employees' or peers' time, when dealing with those above you, the amount of time you can spend is limited. If you desire to lead up, you need to act accordingly.

Hopefully, you won't have to wait an entire career to have a few minutes of your leader's time, as some people apparently must at Microsoft. But whether you have unlimited access to your boss or you only get a few minutes on rare occasions, you need to follow the same guidelines.

1. INVEST 10X

You show your value when you show that you value your leader's time. The best way to do that is to spend ten minutes preparing for every minute that you expect to meet. Management author Charles C. Gibbons confirmed this when he advised, "One of the best ways to save time is to think and plan ahead; five minutes of thinking can often save an hour of work."

In *Today Matters*, I wrote about the lunch I had with John Wooden, legendary former coach of the UCLA Bruins basketball team. Before I went, I spent hours preparing.

> *"One of the best ways to save time is to think and plan ahead; five minutes of thinking can often save an hour of work."*

Let me say one more thing about preparing before taking your leader's time. Most top leaders are good decision makers. (If they're not, they rarely get the opportunity to lead from the

top of the organization.) But many of the times they are unable to make decisions, it is because they don't have enough information. I know that's true with me. When my assistant cannot get a quick answer from me on an issue, it's usually because she hasn't done enough homework on the front end. That's not to say that it happens very often. Linda is awesome, and 99 percent of the time she doesn't even ask me a question until she's put in the groundwork. She easily invests ten times, putting in ten minutes of preparation for every minute of my time.

The less relational connection you have with your leaders, the more time you ought to put in on the front end preparing. The less your leaders know about you, the smaller the window of time you have to prove yourself. But if you prepare well, chances are you will get other opportunities. British prime minister Benjamin Disraeli said, "The secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his time when it comes."

2. DON'T MAKE YOUR BOSS THINK FOR YOU

Not all bosses make themselves inaccessible. As a leader, you may have an open-door policy that makes it easy for the people you lead to come to you when they need to ask questions. But have you ever had an employee who seemed to ask questions constantly without ever taking the time to think for himself? It can be very frustrating, can't it?

In a question-and-answer session, Jack Welch talked about how important it is for someone starting out to be a good thinker. He said it's one of the things that distinguishes a person from the rest of the people on the same level.

Leaders in the middle should ask questions of their bosses only when they cannot answer those questions. Here's how leaders at the top think when they receive questions from leaders in the middle:

- *If they ask questions because they can't think, then we're in trouble.*
- *If they ask questions because they're lazy, then they are in trouble.*
- *If they ask questions so that everyone can move faster, then we're headed for success.*

While bad questions have a negative impact, good questions actually do several positive things: They clarify objectives; they speed up the process of completion; and they stimulate good thinking. All of these things will benefit the organization and help you stand out in a positive way with your leader.

3. BRING SOMETHING TO THE TABLE

For years I have used the expression "bring something to the table" to describe a person's ability to contribute to a conversation or to add value to others at a meeting. Not everyone does that. In life, some people always want to be the "guest." Wherever they go, they are there to be served, to have their needs met, to be the recipient. Because they possess that attitude, they never bring anything to the table for anyone else. After a while, that can really wear out the person who is

always playing host.

People who become 360-Degree Leaders don't work that way. They have a totally different mind-set. They are constantly looking for ways to bring something to the table for their leaders, their peers, and their employees—whether it's resources, ideas, or opportunities. They recognize the wisdom found in the proverb: "A gift opens the way for the giver and ushers him into the presence of the great."[2]

As the leader of an organization, I am always looking for people who bring something to the table in the area of ideas. If they can be creative and generate ideas, that's great. But I also highly value people who are constructive, who take an idea that someone puts on the table and make it better. Often the difference between a good idea and a great idea is the value added to it during the collaborative thinking process.

Some leaders aren't very tactful when it comes to letting others know that they are not adding value to them in the way they would desire. Several years ago I toured Hearst Castle, the home of media magnate William Randolph Hearst in San Simeon, California. Hearst was well-known for the celebrity guests he invited to his estate. But once he became bored with a guest, he let him know it was time for him to go. The guests who were being asked to leave would find a note in their room at bedtime saying that it had been nice to have them as a visitor.

If you always try to bring something of value to the table when you meet with your boss, you may be able to avoid a similar fate at work. If you don't, at the end of the day you just may get a note from the boss. Only yours will be a pink slip.

4. When Asked to Speak, Don't Wing It

I admire people who can think on their feet and handle tough situations, but I have little respect for people who don't prepare. I've found that the first time a person wings it, people usually cannot tell, but by the third or fourth meeting when a person talks without thinking, everybody knows it. Why? Because it all starts to sound the same. If people have little professional depth, they use everything they know as they wing it. The next time they try it, you hear the same kinds of things you heard the last time. After a while, they lose all credibility.

Former world championship boxer Joe Frazier said, "You can map out a fight plan or a life plan. But when the action starts, you're down to your reflexes. That's where your roadwork shows. If you cheated on that in the dark of the morning, you're getting found out now under the bright lights."[3] If you don't put in the work, you always eventually get found out.

5. Learn to Speak Your Boss's Language

When Charlie Wetzel, my writer, and I first started working together back in 1994, I spent a good deal of time working with him to help him understand how I think and learn how I speak. Charlie already had his master's degree in English and was a good writer, but he wasn't yet on my wavelength. The first thing I did was get him recordings of the first one hundred lessons on leadership I taught so that he got a better feel for my communication.

Next, I took him on the road with me when I was speaking.

After a presentation when we were on the plane or at dinner, I would ask him to identify what parts of the session connected with the audience and where he thought the high points were. We would discuss it so that I could sense whether he was getting it. I would also occasionally pass along a bunch of quotes and illustrations to him and ask him to mark what he thought were the good ones. Then we would compare notes.

All of the things I did with Charlie were to help him learn to speak my language. That was critical if he was to write for me, but it's also important for any employee, and especially important for 360-Degree Leaders in the middle of an organization. Learning their boss's language will help them not only to communicate with their boss, but also to communicate with others on behalf of their boss. The goal isn't to become a yes man, but to be able to connect.

6. GET TO THE BOTTOM LINE

Playwright Victor Hugo said, "Short as life is, we make it still shorter by the careless waste of time." I haven't met a good leader yet who didn't want to get quickly to the bottom line. Why? Because they want results. Their motto is, "Never mind about the delivery; just show me the baby."

When you first begin working with a leader, you may need to spend some time giving insight into the process by which you came to a decision. Early on in the relationship, you have to earn your credibility. But as time goes by and the relationship builds, just get to the point. Just because you possess all the data needed to explain what you're doing doesn't mean you need to share it. If your leader wants more

detail or wants to know about the process you used, she can ask you for it.

7. Give a Return on Your Leader's Investment

When you are continually prepared every time you take your leader's time, there is a good chance that he will begin to see the time he spends with you as an investment. And nothing is as rewarding to leaders who invest in others as seeing a positive return on what they give.

One mid-level leader I interviewed said that every year he writes a list of everything his leader taught him the previous year and gives that list to him. He explained, "[It's] to document my appreciation and let him know his input was valuable and resulting in growth. I have learned that when I am open about my growth and learning, people are willing to invest more into my growth and learning."

I mentor about half a dozen people drawing on my thirty-plus years of leadership experience. One of the people I love spending time with is Courtney McBath, pastor of a church in Norfolk, Virginia. Every time I meet with him, in one way or another he says:

Here's what you said the last time we met.
Here's what I learned.
Here's what I did.
Did I do it right?
Can I ask you more questions?

How can a leader not love that?

Recently I received the following e-mail from Courtney:

> Dr. Maxwell,
>
> You've often commented that the greatest joy of a leader/teacher is seeing their students utilizing what they've learned. Last night I had the honor of speaking in a large, orthodox Jewish synagogue for their Sabbath celebration. I was the first African-American Christian man to ever do so and it was a tremendous experience and success. An older Jewish couple told me they wished I could go to their seminaries and teach their young rabbis how to communicate!
>
> Your investment in me has taught me so much about how to cross cultural, religious, and social boundaries and communicate truth to all people. God was glorified last night and you were a significant part of it all. Thank you for being my leader and friend.
>
> I love you dearly, and I'm not just a better leader, I'm a better man because of you.

Thanks,
Courtney

Not only is Courtney always prepared every time he takes my time, but he also takes the counsel I give him and runs with it! What a delight he is to spend time with. And let me tell you something. Because he is so good, when he speaks, I listen. He is leading up, and ours is a relationship where we add value to each other, and that's what 360-Degree Leadership is really all about.

Lead-Up Principle #7

KNOW WHEN TO PUSH AND WHEN TO BACK OFF

Make hay when the sun shines—
that's smart; Go fishing during
the harvest—that's stupid.
—PROVERBS 10:5, THE MESSAGE

In February of 2005, I visited Kiev, Ukraine, to conduct a leadership seminar, visit and teach at Europe's largest church, and launch the Million Leaders Mandate for EQUIP in that country. One of the exciting things I got to do while I was there was walk down the main street just a few blocks from our hotel to the city's Independence Square, site of the Orange Revolution that had occurred just three months before we visited.

As we walked down the wide boulevard, which was closed to vehicular traffic that afternoon, our guide, Tatiana, told us about how the people reacted to the news of the bogus election results that were threatening to keep the government-supported candidate, Viktor Yanukovych, in power. Common people began flooding the downtown area, and they staged peaceful protests in the square. They created a tent city right on the boulevard where we were walking, and they refused to

leave until the government relented and ordered a new and fair election.

Later in our visit, I talked to Steve Weber, EQUIP's country coordinator for Ukraine, about the extraordinary events that occurred in Kiev and led to the election of reformer Viktor Yushchenko as the nation's president. In years past, such a demonstration would have been crushed, and that could have been the case in this instance, were it not for the behavior of the common people of Ukraine. Following is Steve's summary of the events.

> The Orange Revolution was an incredible moment in the history of the Ukrainian people. The masses gathered, not knowing for sure what they would encounter in the city's center . . . Momentum built as multitudes of people came out to not only see but also to participate in the protest. The student organizations held their ground and hundreds decided to pitch tents till the truth was acknowledged. So in the freezing weather, the true heart of Ukraine came alive . . .
>
> The kindness and goodwill expressed during the revolution was fresh and something never previously experienced by most Ukrainians. Normal citizens pouring out their practical support for the protesters was unprecedented. Water, food, hot drinks, winter boots, coats, and much more were flooding the city center. This attitude was almost unheard of in the past. "Give to others? Why? I have needs too" has been the norm—but on that square a better nation was being reborn in the hearts of the people. Even people who came from other cities to support the government-backed candidate couldn't stand against the momentum of the revolution. Upon arrival, they were met with friendliness and generosity from their countrymen that they hadn't expected. Could this really be their Ukraine? Would it be possible to live in a country where all people are valued, respected? . . . People were simply believing, hoping, and longing for a better country.
>
> The government-supported candidate was heavily endorsed by the current regime, and their intimidations backfired . . . The nation woke up

> and said, "Enough! We don't want to live in that kind of country any longer," and their cries were heard.
>
> The consciousness of the nation stirred and the people voted for change . . . The true Ukrainian soul was lifted out of the mire of corruption to a place of dignity and freedom, and the country looks to the future with reclaimed hope.

The common people of Ukraine—those at the bottom of society—led up and took their entire nation with them. And they chose a unique time in history to do it, a time when they could push because of the advances in modern communication. Steve told me, "At the beginning, the national television stations refused to even acknowledge the mass protest going on. But soon they could ignore it no longer, for news was getting around their false ploys. They didn't consider the new day of technology and communication."

The Ukrainian people influenced each other, the government that was attempting to manipulate them and the political process, and even the opposition leader, Victor Yushchenko. After the new elections were over, during his victory speech, Yushchenko wisely acknowledged the leadership of the people and actually bowed to them in respect and thanks.

WHEN SHOULD I PUSH FORWARD?

Timing is critically important to leadership. If the people of Ukraine had not recognized that it was time to push for honest elections, they would probably still be living under the same corrupt government led by Yanukovych. And if they had tried to push free elections thirty years ago while under communist rule, they likely would have been crushed. To be successful,

you have to know when to push and when to back off.

When it comes to gaining influence with your boss, timing is equally important. Poet Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "There are but ten minutes in the life of a pear when it is perfect to eat." It's wise to wait for the right moment to speak up. A great idea at the wrong time will be received just the same as a bad idea. Of course, there are times when you must speak up, even if the timing doesn't seem ideal. The trick is knowing which is which.

Here are four questions you can ask to help determine if it is time to push:

1. Do I Know Something My Boss Doesn't but Needs To?

Every leader in the middle of an organization knows things that the boss doesn't. Not only is that normal, but it's also good. There are times when you may know something your boss doesn't, but you need to communicate it to her because it can hurt the organization or her.

> *"There are but ten minutes in the life of a pear when it is perfect to eat."*
> —Ralph Waldo Emerson

My brother Larry, who is an excellent leader and very successful businessman, tells his staff that he needs to be informed in two kinds of situations: when there is a great problem or when there is a great opportunity. He wants to know about great problems because of their potential to negatively impact the organization. And he wants to know

about the great opportunities for a similar reason—they can also impact the organization, but in a positive direction. Either way, he wants to be involved in how the organization and its leaders will address those situations.

How do you know whether you need to bring something to your boss? I know of only two ways to go about figuring that out. You can ask specific questions up front, requesting that your leader spell out when you should bring him in, as Larry has done. Or you can play it by ear and find out by trial and error, using your best judgment and continuing to communicate until the issues are identified.

2. Is Time Running Out?

There's an old saying, "Better one word in time than two afterward." If that was true in ages past, it is even more applicable today in our fast-paced society where information and markets move so quickly.

Constantine Nicandros, president of Conoco, said, "The competitive marketplace is strewn with good ideas whose time came and went because inadequate attention was given to moving rapidly and hitting an open window of opportunity. The same marketplace is strewn with broken glass of windows of opportunities hit after they were slammed shut."

If waiting will make it impossible for your organization to seize an opportunity, take a risk and push forward. Your leader can always choose not to take your advice, but no leader wants to hear, "You know, I thought that might happen" after it's too late. Give your leader the chance to decide.

3. Are My Responsibilities at Risk?

When your leader entrusts you with tasks, you have a responsibility to follow through and get them done. If you are having difficulty with that, most leaders I know would rather know about it and have an opportunity to help you accomplish them than see you work all by yourself but fail.

This is an issue I've had to work on with Charlie Wetzel. Most of the time Charlie is an all-star. In eleven years of working together, we've completed more than thirty books. One of Charlie's weaknesses is that he is slow to ask for help. If he's facing a problem as he's writing, he'll work too long trying to solve it himself instead of picking up the phone and asking me to lend him a hand. His intentions are good; he wants to lighten my load. And he has a very strong sense of responsibility. (It's one of his strengths according to the self-assessment created by the Gallup Organization.) But that sense of responsibility can also work against him. I don't want him to be perfect; I want us to be effective.

4. Can I Help My Boss Win?

Successful leaders make the right move at the right moment with the right motive. There will be times when you recognize opportunities for your leader to win that she doesn't see. When that is the case, it's time to push forward. How do you know what your boss considers a win? Go back to what you learned when you discovered your leader's heartbeat and priorities. If you see a way for her to accomplish something related to one of those, you can be sure she will consider it a

win.

WHEN SHOULD I BACK OFF?

Knowing when to push is important, since you want to initiate to create wins or avoid losses. Possibly more important is knowing when to back off. Leaders may not always be aware of a missed opportunity because you failed to push, but they will definitely notice if you ought to back off but don't. If you push your boss inappropriately too often, your boss might push you right out the door.

Successful leaders make the right move at the right moment with the right motive.

If you're not sure whether it's time to back off, ask these six questions:

1. AM I PROMOTING MY OWN PERSONAL AGENDA?

From the perspective of leaders at the top, organizations have two kinds of leaders in the middle: those who ask, "What can you do for me?" and those who ask, "What can I do for you?" The first are trying to ride their leaders—and any colleagues or employees they find useful—to the top. The second are trying to carry their organization—along with its leaders and others they can help—to the top.

Just as there are sometimes selfish leaders at the top of an

organization, which I described in the Frustration Challenge, there are also selfish leaders in the middle. They see everything in light of their personal agenda instead of their professional responsibilities.

In contrast, 360-Degree Leaders back off if they realize that they are beginning to promote their own agenda instead of what's good for the organization. Not only that, but they are willing to sacrifice their own resources for the greater good of the organization when necessary.

2. HAVE I ALREADY MADE MY POINT?

Investment expert Warren Buffet said, "Sometimes it's not how hard you row the boat. It's how fast the stream is going." Whenever you're dealing with your leader, you need to pay attention to the flow of the stream.

It is very important to learn to communicate your point of view clearly to your leader. It is your responsibility to communicate what you know and give your perspective on an issue. But it's one thing to communicate and another to coerce your leader. The choice your leader makes is not your responsibility. Besides, if you have made your point clearly, you are unlikely to help your cause by continuing to hammer away at it with your leader. President Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "You do not lead by hitting people over the head—that's assault, not leadership." If you keep repeating yourself after your point's been made, you're just trying to get your own way.

"Sometimes it's not how hard you row the boat. It's

how fast the stream is going."
—WARREN BUFFET

David Branker, the executive director of a large organization, said that he had a hard time learning the lesson of when to back off, but it paid dividends in his leadership. He said:

> Learning to back off once you've made your point can make the most foolish person appear wise. When I was a rookie leader I had a tough time learning this. My boss at the time became more and more infuriated [with me when I didn't back off] especially when she disagreed with my point of view and could not understand why I wasn't dropping the issue. I was helped in this issue by a gracious colleague who was much more seasoned in leadership at the time. He said, "I will cue you when you need to drop an issue by simply looking down." Thanks to him and his creative idea, I learned to read when an issue needed to be dropped for a more opportune time.

The next time you are in a meeting with your boss, pay attention to the way you handle the presentation of your point of view. Do you state it clearly as a contribution to the discussion? Or do you hammer away at it to try to "win"? Trying to win your point at all costs with your boss can be like trying to do the same with your spouse. Even if you win, you lose.

3. MUST EVERYONE BUT ME TAKE THE RISK?

As I've already mentioned, it's easier to risk someone else's resources than your own. And if you keep pushing when you don't share in the risk, you will inevitably alienate the people who must shoulder the risk. People don't want to enter a

partnership with someone when they have all the risk and their partner has none.

> *People don't want to enter a partnership with someone when they have all the risk and their partner has none.*

Leaders in the middle who distinguish themselves usually do so because they have "skin in the game." If they are willing to risk their resources, opportunities, and success, then they win the respect of their leaders.

4. DOES THE ATMOSPHERE SAY "NO"?

Kathie Wheat, a former employee who worked for Walt Disney World right out of college, said that Disney employees are trained to be sensitive to the emotional atmosphere and dynamics of the guests in their parks. One of the things they teach employees is to never approach a family that is arguing. That makes good sense.

Effective 360-Degree Leaders are like weather forecasters. They are able to read the atmosphere of their workplaces—and especially of their bosses. Take a look at this "weather chart" for leaders in the middle of an organization.

FORECAST	OUTLOOK	ACTION
Sunny	Visibility is clear and the sun is shining	Move forward
Foggy weather conditions	No way to read	Wait for the fog t
Partly cloudy	Sunny one minute, cloudy the next	Wait for the right moment

Rainy	Steady rain but no thunder or lightning	Move only in an emergency
Thunderstorms	Lightning could strike anywhere	Wait for the storm pass
Hurricane	Gale force winds, damage is unavoidable	Run for cover

Obviously I'm having a little fun with this, but it really is important that you read what's going on around you and pay attention to your boss's mood. Don't let a great idea get rained on because you picked the wrong day to introduce it.

5. Is the Timing Right Only for Me?

Emperor Hadrian said, "To be right too soon is to be wrong." Let's face it. Leaders in the middle can be in a tough spot when it comes to timing. People at the top often get to choose the timing for what they do. It may not be as simple as saying, "Let's go," because they do have to prepare the people to move. But they get to decide when the timing is right. On the other hand, people at the bottom have little choice concerning when to go. They either keep up or get left behind.

Effective 360-Degree Leaders are like weather forecasters. They are able to read the atmosphere of their workplaces.

When Titus was emperor of Rome, he had the coins of the empire struck with the image of a dolphin curled around an anchor. At the time, the dolphin was considered the swiftest and most playful of marine animals. The anchor represented

steadiness and unchanging conviction. Together they symbolized the balance between initiative and wisdom, progress and caution. A family crest years later used the same symbol with the motto *festina lente*, meaning "hasten slowly."

That's what 360-Degree Leaders must do. They must hasten slowly. If the timing is right for everyone, then move forward. But if it is right only for them, they should back off and move more slowly.

6. Does My Request Exceed Our Relationship?

One of my favorite stories from the Old Testament is the story of Esther. It's a tremendous lesson in leadership. When Xerxes was ruler of Persia, one day he summoned his queen, Vashti, but she refused to come, which was unthinkable in those times. As a result, Xerxes stripped her of her position and prohibited her from ever seeing him again. Meanwhile, he sought to find someone else to take her place, and after a long and elaborate process, Esther, a Hebrew, became his queen.

All was well until a member of Xerxes' court convinced the ruler to let him have all the Jews in the kingdom executed. Esther faced a dilemma. Though her life probably would have been spared, could she stand by and watch her fellow Hebrews die? If she approached Xerxes to ask him to spare her countrymen when he didn't wish to see her, he could order her to be executed. Her relationship with Xerxes was tenuous, and she knew it. If her request exceeded that relationship, she was doomed.

In the end, with faith and courage, Esther approached the king, her request was granted, and the Jews were spared. It was a great challenge for this leader in the middle, but she was successful in leading up.

Leaders in the middle of an organization don't have a lot of authority, and they don't hold a lot of cards. Often their only "ace" is the relationship they have with the leaders above them. They must play that ace carefully. If they push and their request exceeds the relationship, they are asking for their ace to be trumped.

You can tell a lot about the character and motives of people in the middle of an organization by watching when they push and when they back off. My wife, Margaret, and I enjoy visiting presidential libraries. Recently, while visiting the George H. W. Bush museum, we read a story about the actions of Vice President George H. W. Bush the day President Ronald Reagan was shot in 1981. Bush said that when he got the news, the enormity of the incident came upon him, and right then he prayed for the president.

Since Reagan was in surgery, Bush was really the acting executive of the country, but he deliberately backed off to make sure that he didn't appear to challenge or displace the president. For example, when Bush went to the White House, he refused to land on the south lawn, because by tradition only the president lands there. And at seven o'clock that night when Bush presided over an emergency cabinet meeting, he sat in his normal seat, not in the president's.

Reagan, of course, recovered and resumed his duties, and also went on to be reelected as president in 1984. Bush was

content to stay in the background, serving his leader and his country—until the time was right and the American people elected him their leader.

Lead-Up Principle #8

BECOME A GO-TO PLAYER

If you found yourself in a situation at work where you were on a deadline and trying to finish a project that was critical for the success of the organization, and then suddenly, with almost no time left, you were handed another critical task that had to be completed at the same time, what would you do? In this case, let's assume that delaying the deadline beyond today was not a possibility. It's do or die. How do you respond? If you're like most good leaders, you hand one of the tasks to a go-to player.

The Law of the Catalyst in *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork* states that winning teams have players who make things happen. That's always true—whether in sports, business, government, or some other arena. Those team members who can make things happen are their go-to players. They demonstrate consistent competence, responsibility, and dependability.

If that is what you do in a crunch—or would do if you trusted one of your players to consistently deliver—then why would *your* leaders do any differently? They wouldn't. All leaders are looking for people who can step up and make a difference when it matters. When they find such people, they come to rely on them and are inevitably influenced by them.

GO-TO PLAYERS PRODUCE WHEN . . .

Few things elevate a person above his peers the way becoming a go-to player does. Everyone admires go-to players and looks to them when the heat is on—not only their leaders, but also their followers and peers. When I think of go-to players, I mean people who always produce.

1. GO-TO PLAYERS PRODUCE WHEN THE PRESSURE'S ON

There are many different kinds of people in the workplace, and you can measure them according to what they do for the organization:

WHAT THEY DO	KIND OF PLAYER
Never deliver	Detrimental
Sometimes deliver	Average
Always deliver when in their comfort zone	Valuable
Always deliver regardless of the situation	Invaluable

Go-to players are the people who find a way to make things happen no matter what. They don't have to be in familiar surroundings. They don't have to be in their comfort zones. The circumstances don't have to be fair or favorable. The pressure doesn't hinder them either. In fact, if anything, the more pressure there is, the better they like it. They always produce when the heat is on.

Go-to players are the people who find a way to make

things happen no matter what. They don't have to be in familiar surroundings. They don't have to be in their comfort zones.

2. Go-To Players Produce When the Resources Are Few

In 2004 when *Today Matters* came out and I was frequently being asked to speak on the subject, I was once booked to do back-to-back sessions in Little Rock, Arkansas. After the first session, the site ran out of books. When the leader of the organization I was speaking for found out, he mobilized some of his people and sent them out to all the bookstores in town to buy more copies of the book so that his people could have access to them right after my second speaking session. I think he ended up buying every copy in town.

The thing I loved about it was that he wanted his people to benefit from the book, and he knew that if he didn't have it there after I spoke, they probably wouldn't get a copy. So he made it happen—even though he had to buy the books at full retail and resell them for that same amount. It took a lot of effort and provided no financial return. What a leader!

3. Go-To Players Produce When the Momentum Is Low

Organizations have only three kinds of people when it comes to momentum. There are momentum breakers—people who sabotage the leader or organization and actually sap

momentum as a result. These people have terrible attitudes and represent the bottom 10 percent of the organization. (At General Electric, Jack Welch made it his goal every year to identify and fire these people.) The second group is comprised of the momentum takers—people who merely take things as they come. They neither create nor diminish momentum; they simply flow with it. These people represent the middle 80 percent.

The final group is the momentum makers—the people who move things forward and create momentum. These are the leaders in the organization and comprise the top 10 percent. These momentum makers make progress. They overcome obstacles. They help move others along. They actually create energy in the organization when the rest of the team is feeling tired or discouraged.

4. Go-To Players Produce When the Load Is Heavy

Good employees always have the desire to be helpful to their leaders. I've worked with many of them over the years. I always appreciate it when someone who works with me says, "I've finished my work. Can I do something for you?" But there is another level of play that some go-to players reach, and you can see it in their ability to carry a heavy load anytime their leader needs it. They don't help the leader with a heavy load only when theirs is light. They do it anytime their leader's load is heavy.

Linda Eggers, Tim Elmore, and Dan Reiland are examples of

heavy load lifters for me. For years, when I've been pressed, they've taken tasks from me and completed them with excellence. Dan Reiland is so incredible at this that he continues to do it even now—and he doesn't even work for me anymore. He does it as a friend.

If you have the willingness and capacity to lift the load of your leaders when they need it, you will have influence with them.

The keys to becoming this kind of player are availability and responsibility. Being a heavy load lifter is really an attitude issue, not a position issue. If you have the willingness and capacity to lift the load of your leaders when they need it, you will have influence with them.

5. Go-To Players Produce When the Leader Is Absent

The greatest opportunity for a leader in the middle of an organization to distinguish himself is when the leader is absent. It is at those times that a leadership vacuum exists, and leaders can rise up to fill it. True, when leaders know they will be absent, they usually designate a leader to stand in for them. But even then, there are still opportunities for people to step up, take responsibility, and shine.

If you step forward to lead when there is a leadership vacuum, you may have a very good chance of distinguishing yourself. You should also know, however, that when people step up to fill that vacuum, it almost always exposes their true

colors. If their motives are good, and they desire to lead for the good of the organization, it will show through. If they are attempting a power grab for personal gain and their own advancement, that will show through too.

6. Go-To Players Produce When the Time Is Limited

I love a sign I saw at a small business called "The 57 Rules to Deliver the Goods." Beneath the title it read:

Rule 1: Deliver the Goods
Rule 2: The Other 56 Don't Matter

That's the philosophy of go-to players. They deliver no matter how tough the situation is.

As I was working on this chapter, Rod Loy told me a story about when he was a leader in the middle of an organization. At a large meeting, his leader announced a new program that he said was in place. Roy listened with interest, because he had not been aware of it. It sounded great, but then his leader announced that Rod would be leading the program, and anyone who was interested in it could talk to him about it after the meeting.

Rod had not been informed of his role in this program, but that didn't matter. During the rest of the meeting while his leader spoke, Rod quickly sketched out the design and action plan for the program. When the meeting was over and people approached him, he communicated his plan and launched it.

Rod said it may not have been his best work, but it was good work under the circumstances. It created a win for the organization, preserved his leader's credibility, and served the people well.

You may never find yourself in the kind of situation Rod did. But if you adopt the positive attitude and tenacity of a go-to player, and take every opportunity to make things happen, you will probably perform as he did under similar circumstances. If you do, your leader will come to rely on you, and the people we rely on increase their influence and credibility every day we work with them.

Lead-Up Principle #9

BE BETTER TOMORROW THAN YOU ARE TODAY

A turkey was chatting with a bull. "I would love to be able to get to the top of that tree," sighed the turkey, "but I haven't got the energy."

"Well," replied the bull, "why don't you nibble on some of my droppings? They're packed with nutrients."

The turkey pecked at a lump of dung and found that it actually gave him enough strength to reach the lowest branch of the tree. The next day, after eating some more dung, he reached the second branch. Finally after a fourth night, there he was proudly perched at the top of the tree. But he was promptly spotted by a hunter, who shot him down out of the tree.

The moral of the story: BS might get you to the top, but it won't keep you there.

How Growth Helps You Lead Up

I've met a lot of people who have destination disease. They think that they have "arrived" by obtaining a specific position or getting to a certain level in an organization. When they get to that desired place, they stop striving to grow or improve.

What a waste of potential!

There's certainly nothing wrong with the desire to progress in your career, but never try to "arrive." Instead, intend your journey to be open-ended. Most people have no idea how far they can go in life. They aim way too low. I know I did when I first started out, but my life began changing when I stopped setting goals for *where* I wanted to be and started setting the course for *who* I wanted to be. I have discovered for others and me that the key to personal development is being more *growth* oriented than *goal* oriented.

The key to personal development is being more growth *oriented than* goal *oriented.*

There is no downside to making growth your goal. If you keep learning, you will be better tomorrow than you are today, and that can do so many things for you.

THE BETTER YOU ARE, THE MORE PEOPLE LISTEN

If you had an interest in cooking, with whom would you rather spend an hour—Mario Batali (chef, cookbook author, owner of Babbo Ristorante e Enoteca and other restaurants in New York City, and host of two shows on the Food Network) or your neighbor who loves to cook and actually does it "every once in a while"? Or if you were a leadership student, as I am, would you rather spend that hour with the president of the United States or with the person who runs the local convenience store? It's no contest. Why? Because you respect most and can learn best from the person with great

competence and experience.

Competence is a key to credibility, and credibility is the key to influencing others. If people respect you, they will listen to you. President Abraham Lincoln said, "I don't think much of a man who is not wiser today than he was yesterday." By focusing on growth, you become wiser each day.

THE BETTER YOU ARE, THE GREATER YOUR VALUE TODAY

If you were to plant fruit and nut trees in your yard, when could you expect to start harvesting from them? Would you be surprised to learn that you had to wait years—three to seven years for fruit, five to fifteen years for nuts? If you want a tree to produce, first you have to let it grow. The more the tree has grown and has created strong roots that can sustain it, the more it can produce. The more it can produce, the greater its value.

People are not all that different. The more they grow, the more valuable they are because they can produce more. In fact, it's said that a tree keeps growing as long as it is living. I would love to live in such a way that the same could be said for me —"he kept growing until the day he died."

I love this quote from Elbert Hubbard: "If what you did yesterday still looks big to you, you haven't done much today." If you look back at past accomplishments, and they don't look small to you now, then you haven't grown very much since you completed them. If you look back at a job you did years ago, and you don't think you could do it better now,

then you're not improving in that area of your life.

> *If you're not moving forward as a learner, then you are moving backward as a leader.*

If you are not continually growing, then it is probably damaging your leadership ability. Warren Bennis and Bert Nanus, authors of *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge*, said, "It is the capacity to develop and improve their skills that distinguishes leaders from followers."[1] If you're not moving forward as a learner, then you are moving backward as a leader.

The Better You Are, the Greater Your Potential for Tomorrow

Who are the hardest people to teach? The people who have never tried to learn. Getting them to accept a new idea is like trying to transplant a tomato plant into concrete. Even if you could get it to go into the ground, you know it isn't going to survive anyway. The more you learn and grow, the greater your capacity to keep learning. And that makes your potential greater and your value for tomorrow higher.

Indian reformer Mahatma Gandhi said, "The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems." That is how great our potential is. All we have to do is keep fighting to learn more, grow more, become more.

One leader I interviewed for this book told me that when he was in his first job, his boss would sit him down after he made

a mistake and talk it through with him. Every time before he left one of those meetings, his boss asked, "Did you learn something from this?" and he would ask him to explain. At the time, this young leader thought his boss was being pretty tough on him. But as he progressed through his career, he discovered that many of his successes could be traced back to practices he adopted as a result of those talks. It made a huge positive impact on him because it kept making him better.

If you want to influence the people who are ahead of you in the organization—and keep influencing them—then you need to keep getting better. An investment in your growth is an investment in your ability, your adaptability, and your promotability. No matter how much it costs you to keep growing and learning, the cost of doing nothing is greater.

How to Become Better Tomorrow

Founding father Ben Franklin said, "By improving yourself, the world is made better. Be not afraid of growing too slowly. Be afraid only of standing still. Forget your mistakes, but remember what they taught you." So how do you become better tomorrow? By becoming better today. The secret of your success can be found in your daily agenda. Here is what I suggest you do to keep growing and leading up:

1. Learn Your Craft Today

On a wall in the office of a huge tree farm hangs a sign. It says, "The best time to plant a tree is twenty-five years ago.

The second best time is today." There is no time like the present to become an expert at your craft. Maybe you wish you had started earlier. Or maybe you wish you had found a better teacher or mentor years ago. None of that matters. Looking back and lamenting will not help you move forward.

A friend of the poet Longfellow asked the secret of his continued interest in life. Pointing to a nearby apple tree, Longfellow said, "The purpose of that apple tree is to grow a little new wood each year. That is what I plan to do." The friend would have found a similar sentiment in one of Longfellow's poems:

Not enjoyment and not sorrow
Is our destined end or way;
But to act that each tomorrow
Find us further than today.[2]

You may not be where you're supposed to be. You may not be what you want to be. You don't have to be what you used to be. And you don't have to ever arrive. You just need to learn to be the best you can be right now. As Napoleon Hill said, "You can't change where you started, but you can change the direction you are going. It's not what you are going to do, but it's what you are doing now that counts."

"You can't change where you started, but you can change the direction you are going. It's not what you are going to do, but it's what you are doing now that counts."
—NAPOLEON HILL

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2. TALK YOUR CRAFT TODAY

Once you reach a degree of proficiency in your craft, then one of the best things you can do for yourself is talk your craft with others on the same and higher levels than you. Many people do this naturally. Guitarists talk about guitars. Parents talk about raising children. Golfers talk about golf. They do so because it's enjoyable, it fuels their passion, it teaches them new skills and insights, and it prepares them to take action.

Talking to peers is wonderful, but if you don't also make an effort to strategically talk your craft with those ahead of you in experience and skill, then you're really missing learning

opportunities. Douglas Randlett meets regularly with a group of retired multimillionaires so that he can learn from them. Before he retired, Major League Baseball player Tony Gwynn was known to talk hitting with anybody who had knowledge about it. Every time he saw Ted Williams, they talked hitting.

I enjoy talking about leadership with good leaders all the time. In fact, I make it a point to schedule a learning lunch with someone I admire at least six times a year. Before I go, I study up on them by reading their books, studying their lessons, listening to their speeches, or whatever else I need to do. My goal is to learn enough about them and their "sweet spot" to ask the right questions. If I do that, then I can learn from their strengths. But that's not my ultimate goal. My goal is to learn what I can transfer from their strength zones to mine. That's where my growth will come from—not from what they're doing. I have to apply what I learn to my situation.

The secret to a great interview is listening. It is the bridge between learning about them and learning about you. And that's your objective.

3. Practice Your Craft Today

William Osler, the physician who wrote *The Principles and Practice of Medicine* in 1892, once told a group of medical students:

> Banish the future. Live only for the hour and its allotted work. Think not of the amount to be accomplished, the difficulties to be overcome, or the end to be attained, but set earnestly at the little task at your elbow, letting that be sufficient for the day; for surely our plain duty is, as Carlyle says, "Not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly

at hand."

The only way to improve is to practice your craft until you know it inside and out. At first, you do what you know to do. The more you practice your craft, the more you know. But as you do more, you will also discover more about what you ought to do differently. At that point you have a decision to make: Will you do what you have always done, or will you try to do more of what you think you should do? The only way you improve is to get out of your comfort zone and try new things.

People often ask me, "How can I grow my business?" or, "How can I make my department better?" The answer is for you personally to grow. The only way to grow your organization is to grow the leaders who run it. By making yourself better, you make others better. Retired General Electric CEO Jack Welch said, "Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others."[3] And the time to start is today.

Section III Review
The Principles 360Degree Leaders Need to Lead Up

Before you begin to learn what it takes to lead across, review the nine principles you need to master in order to lead up:

1. Lead yourself exceptionally well.
2. Lighten your leader's load.
3. Be willing to do what others won't.
4. Do more than manage—lead!
5. Invest in relational chemistry.
6. Be prepared every time you take your leader's time.
7. Know when to push and when to back off.
8. Become a go-to player.
9. Be better tomorrow than you are today.

How well are you doing those nine things? If you're not sure where you stand, take the 360Degree Leadership assessment, offered free of charge to people who have purchased this book. For more information, go to 360DegreeLeader.com.

SECTION IV

THE PRINCIPLES 360-DEGREE LEADERS PRACTICE TO LEAD ACROSS

"Follow me, I'll walk with you."

What distinguishes a merely competent leader from one who goes to the next level? Competent leaders can lead followers. They can find, gather, recruit, and enlist them. This is no easy task, but a leader who can lead only followers is limited. To make it to the next level of leadership, a leader must be able to lead other leaders—not just those below them, but also those above and alongside them.

Leaders who work really hard and exhibit very high competence can influence their bosses. So in that respect, they have become leaders of leaders. But leading peers is another kind of challenge. In fact, for highly productive people who create feelings of jealousy or resentment because of their relationship with their bosses, leading peers can be especially difficult. If the leaders in the middle who lead up are seen as political or as brownnosers, then their peers may reject any overtures toward leading across.

To succeed as a 360-Degree Leader who leads peer-to-peer, you have to work at giving your colleagues reasons to respect and follow you. How do you do that? By helping your peers

win. If you can help them win, you will not only help the organization but will also help yourself.

The people who find it most difficult to lead across are those who don't excel at building relationships. If you look back at the Five Levels of Leadership in "The Position Myth," you'll see that after the first level, which is position, the second and third levels are permission and production. Leaders who excel at production but neglect permission may be able to influence their bosses, but they will have a nearly impossible time trying to influence their peers. If you want to lead across, you need to work for and win your peers' permission. That can be a great challenge, but it is definitely one worth accepting.

Lead-Across Principle #1

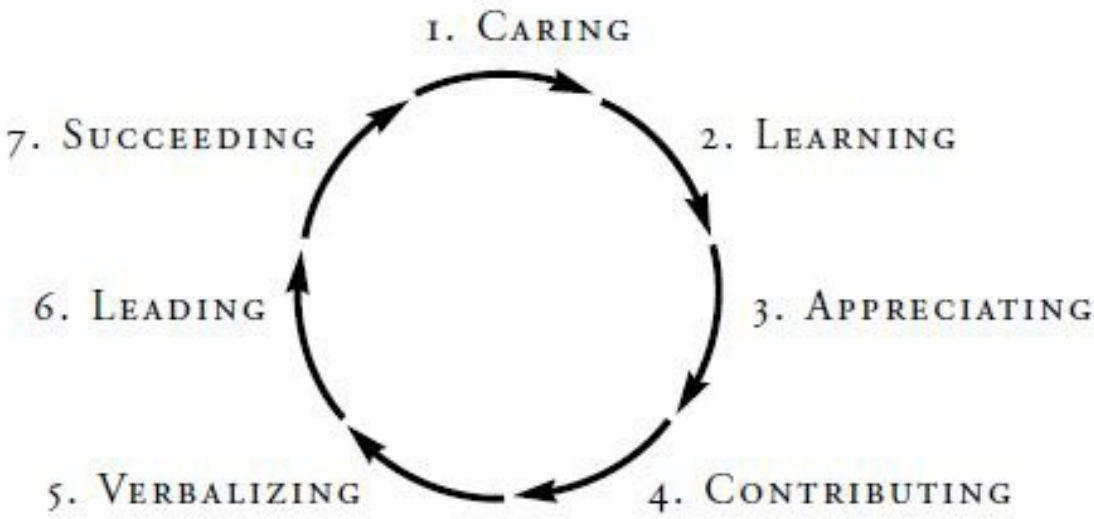
UNDERSTAND, PRACTICE, AND COMPLETE THE LEADERSHIP LOOP

Many people who have difficulty leading across have trouble because their approach is too shortsighted. They try to gain influence too quickly. Leading is not a one-time event; it's an ongoing process that takes time—especially with peers.

If you want to gain influence and credibility with people working alongside you, then don't try to take shortcuts or cheat the process. Instead, learn to understand, practice, and complete the leadership loop with them.

THE LEADERSHIP LOOP

Take a look at the following graphic, which will give you an idea of what the leadership loop looks like:



You can see that it's a cycle that starts with caring and ends with succeeding. Here's how each of these steps in the loop works.

1. Caring—Take an Interest in People

This may sound too simple, but it really all starts here. You have to show people that you care about them by taking an interest in them. Many leaders are so action oriented and agenda driven that they don't make people a high enough priority. If that describes you, then you need to turn that around.

I don't mean to sound crass, but it helps if you like people. If you're not a people person, that may be the first step you need to take. Look for value in every person. Put yourself in others' shoes. Find reasons to like them. You won't take an interest in people if deep down you care nothing about them. And if you

care nothing about them, that flaw will always be a hindrance to your ability to lead people.

If this is an area of challenge for you, then you may want to take a look at *25 Ways to Win with People: How to Make Others Feel Like a Million Bucks*, which I coauthored with Les Parrott; or read the classic *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, by Dale Carnegie. However you go about developing people skills, just remember that people always move toward someone who increases them and away from anyone who decreases them.

People always move toward someone who increases them and away from anyone who decreases them.

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2. LEARNING—GET TO KNOW PEOPLE

Showing people that you care about them is always a good thing. But if you don't also make an effort to get to know them as individuals, you run the risk of being like the *Peanuts* character, Charlie Brown, who said, "I love mankind. It's people I can't stand."

Take the time to talk to your peers in the organization. Ask to hear their stories. Try to discover their best skills. Learn to appreciate their differences. Ask for their opinions on work-related issues. And as much as you can, try to put yourself in their shoes.

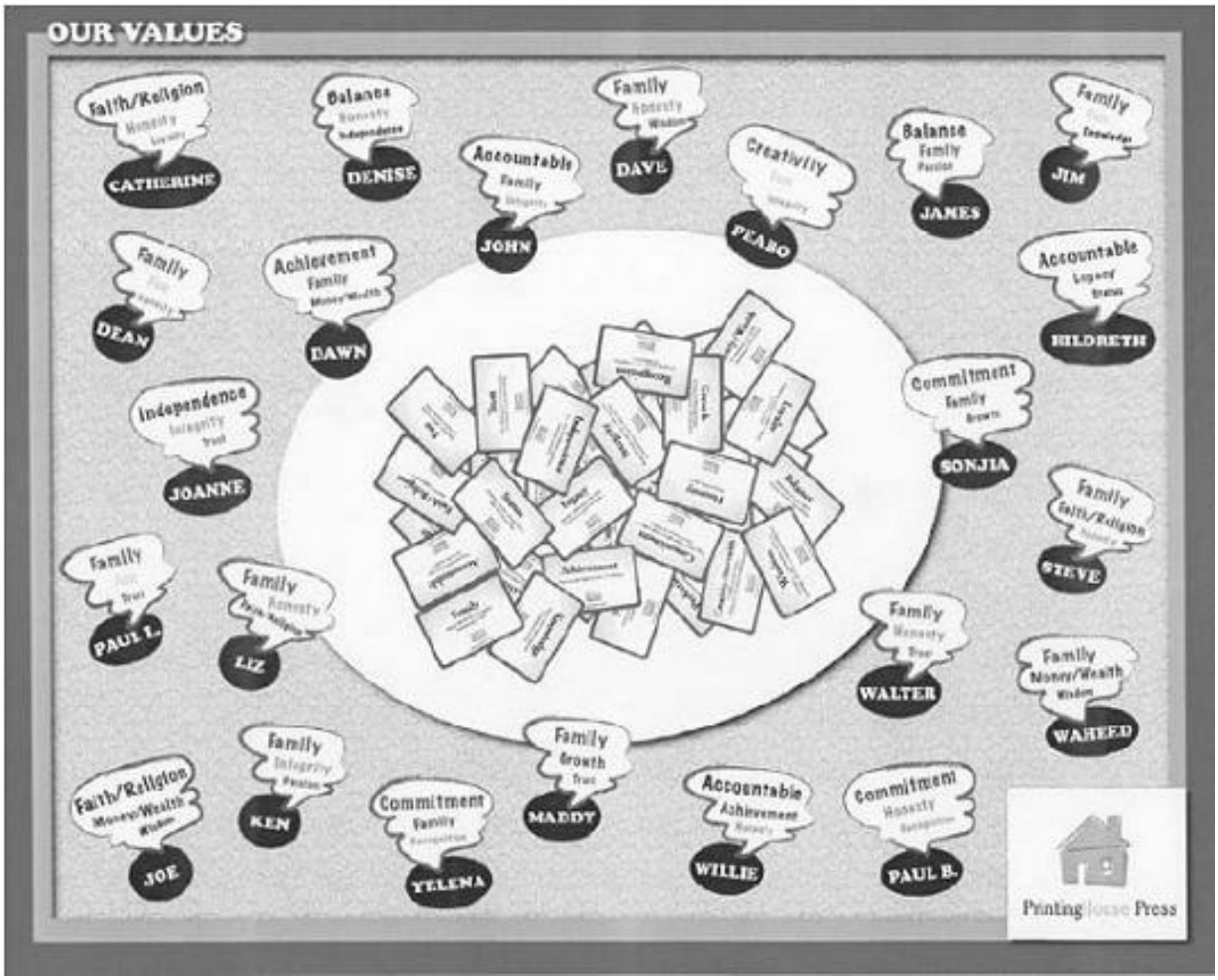
There are also structured ways to learn about your coworkers. I often speak for Maximum Impact, a company I founded that is now owned and led by Todd Duncan. One of

the exercises the organization offers to clients involves Value Cards. Participants are asked to thumb through a stack of forty-plus cards, each printed with a value, such as integrity, commitment, wealth, faith, creativity, and family. They are asked to choose their top six values, the ones they consider nonnegotiable. Then they are asked to eliminate two cards, and then another two. It prompts people to weigh what matters and make some tough choices.

Recently Rick Packer, a corporate trainer, shared an e-mail with me that he had received from John Farrell of PrintingHouse Press. In it he raved about the Value Card experience and how he used it to get to know the people in his organization better. John said:

> A few weeks after I got back [from the workshop], I sat with each of my twenty-five employees—two at a time—so they could take part in the Maximum Impact Value Cards exercise. I told them I thought it would be a great experience, and that they may find out something more about each other than they knew before. I wasn't disappointed. Each one of the twenty-five enjoyed it so much that they were all eager for me to publicly post the values of each one of their coworkers. So by unanimous vote, I had my graphic designer create and print a 30 x 24-inch poster displaying our top three values. Today it has been officially posted in our office for all to see.

John went on to say that the camaraderie that already existed among his people had gotten even better. He also included a miniature version of the poster his artist created.



Not only does he now know his people better, but they are also in a better position to know, appreciate, and influence each other.

3. Appreciating—Respect People

We tend to appreciate people who can do things we admire. That's only natural. But if we only appreciate people like ourselves, we're missing so much. We should strive to see others' unique experiences and skills as a resource and try to learn from them.

Dennis Bakke, chief executive of AES and author of *Joy at Work,* has an interesting take on this. He intentionally makes positive assumptions about people and strives to live them out in his desire to respect people. Bakke states his philosophy by describing the people at AES. He says they:

- are creative, thoughtful, trustworthy adults, capable of making important decisions;
- are accountable and responsible for their decisions and actions;
- are fallible (make mistakes, sometimes on purpose);
- are unique; and
- want to use our talents and skills to make a positive contribution to the organization and the world.[1]

If you treat your peers (and your employees) with this kind of respect, appreciating them for who they are, then they will be more likely to respect and listen to you in return.

4. CONTRIBUTING—ADD VALUE TO PEOPLE

Few things increase the credibility of leaders more than adding value to the people around them. That is especially true when they are neither obligated to do it nor likely to receive any kind of direct benefit from it. When you go out of your way to add value to your peers, they understand that you really want them to win with no hidden agenda of your own.

Here are some suggestions for how to get started:

Few things increase the credibility of leaders more than adding value to the people around them.

Don't keep your best stuff to yourself. Our natural tendency is to protect what's ours, whether it's our turf, our ideas, or our resources. But if you share what you have when it can help others, you really send a positive message to the people who work with you.

Fill in their gaps. I love that in the movie *Rocky*, Sylvester Stallone's character says of his fiancée Adrian: "I got gaps, she's got gaps, together we don't got gaps." That could be said of our coworkers and us. Instead of exploiting other people's gaps to get ahead of them, why not fill in each other's gaps and both get ahead?

Invest in their growth. I suggested in Challenge #2 (The Frustration Challenge: Following an Ineffective Leader) that you share resources with your leader. Why not do the same with your peers? As the saying goes, when you light another's candle, you lose nothing of your own. You just produce more light.

Take them along. Many times when we get an opportunity to do something exciting or special, we soak up the experience and enjoy it, but we keep it to ourselves; 360-Degree Leaders always think in terms of who they can take along with them at those times. If you want to influence your peers, share the good things you're doing with them.

At first it may feel a little awkward to add value to people on your own level. If you work in a hostile or highly competitive environment, your peers may at first look at you with

suspicion. But persevere. If you give with no strings attached and try to help others win, they will, in time, come to trust your motives.

5. VERBALIZING—AFFIRM PEOPLE

Take a moment to think about the teachers you've had in your life. Who were your favorites? Why did you like those teachers more than the dozens of others? If you're like most people, you revered them because they affirmed you and made you feel good about yourself.

Few things build a person up like affirmation. According to *Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition* (Simon and Schuster, 1991), the word *affirm* comes from *ad firmare*, which means "to make firm." So when you affirm people, you make firm within them the things you see about them. Do that often enough, and the belief that solidifies within them will become stronger than the doubts they have about themselves.

If you want to influence your peers, become their best cheerleader. Praise their strengths. Acknowledge their accomplishments. Say positive things about them to your boss and peers. Sincerely compliment them at every opportunity, and someday you may have the opportunity to influence them.

6. LEADING—INFLUENCE PEOPLE

After taking the previous five steps—caring, learning, appreciating, contributing, and verbalizing—now you are finally ready to start leading your peers. The things you've

done up to now have served to build your relationship with them, give you credibility, and display that your motives are good. With that kind of history, you will have earned the opportunity to influence them.

Some leaders are able to go through all the steps quickly, while others need quite a bit of time to complete them. The greater the natural leadership gifting you have, the more quickly you will be able to do it. But influencing others is not the end of the road. If your sole motivation is merely to get people to listen to you or do what you want, then you've really missed the boat. If you desire to become a 360-Degree Leader, then you need to take the next step. You need to help them win!

7. SUCCEEDING—WIN WITH PEOPLE

I know that you have the desire to lead others, or you would not have come this far in the book. But I don't know if you've given much thought to why you want to lead. I believe that good leaders balance two very important motivations. The first is to fulfill their vision. All leaders have inside of them a dream, a vision they want to see come to fruition. For some it's modest; for others it's huge. The second motivation is to see others succeed. Great leaders don't use people so that they can win. They lead people so that they all can win together. If that is truly your motivation, you can become the kind of person others want to follow—whether they are beside, above, or below you in the organizational hierarchy.

Great leaders don't use people so that they can win.

The wonderful thing about helping others succeed is that it earns you more opportunities to help an even greater number of people. Haven't you seen that in every area of life? A winning coach or business leader has a much easier time recruiting potential players than someone without a winning track record. Once leaders prove that they can help make people's dreams come true, others seek them out so that they, too, can be helped to win.

And that's what starts the cycle over again. If you help others succeed, additional people will come into your life whom you will have an opportunity to help succeed. Every time that happens, you must choose to go through the process again, beginning with caring and ending with succeeding. You can't take shortcuts. True, if you help others win consistently for a long time, they will allow you to go through the process more quickly with them, but you still have to take each step.

When Lou Holtz was coaching Notre Dame's football team, he was quoted as saying, "Do what's right! Do the best you can and treat others the way you want to be treated, because they will ask three questions: (1) Can I trust you? (2) Do you believe in this? Are you committed to this—have a passion for this? (3) Do you care about me as a person?" If the people around you can answer yes to all of those questions, then you have a very good chance of making an impact on their lives.

Lead-Across Principle #2

PUT COMPLETING FELLOW LEADERS AHEAD OF COMPETING WITH THEM

Chris Hodges, a good leader who is a native of Baton Rouge, is well-known for telling Boudreaux jokes, a type of humor popular in Louisiana. Recently on a trip for EQUIP, he told me this one (I'll try to capture the accent in writing as best I can—just think Justin Wilson):

> A group of Cajuns was sitting around bragging about how successful they were. Thibideaux says, "I just bought me another shrimp boat, yeah, and I got me a crew of ten people workin' for me."
>
> "Dat ain't nottin'," says Landry, "I been promoted at the refinery, and now I got fifty men workin' for me."
>
> Boudreaux hears this, and he doesn't want to look bad in front of his friends, so he says, "Oh yeah, well I got three hundred people under me."
>
> Thibideaux says, "What you talkin' 'bout, Boudreaux? You mow lawns all day."
>
> "Dat's true," says Boudreaux, "but now I'm cuttin' da grass at the cemetery, and I got three hundred people under me."

There's nothing wrong with competition. The problem for many leaders is that they end up competing against their peers in their own organization in a way that hurts the team and them. It all depends on how you handle competition and how you channel it. In healthy working environments, there is both

competition and teamwork. The issue is to know when each is appropriate. When it comes to your teammates, you want to compete in such a way that instead of *competing* with them, you are *completing* them. Those are two totally different mind-sets.

Winning at all costs will cost you when it comes to your peers.

COMPETING VS. COMPLETING

COMPETING	COMPLETING
Scarcity mind-set	Abundance mind-set
Me first	Organization first
Destroys trust	Develops trust
Thinks win—lose	Thinks win—win
Single thinking	Shared thinking
(my good ideas)	(our great ideas)
Excluding others	Including others

Winning at all costs will cost you when it comes to your peers. If your goal is to beat your peers, then you will never be able to lead across with them.

HOW TO BALANCE COMPETING AND COMPLETING

The bottom line is that the success of the whole team is more important than any individual wins. Organizations need both

competition and teamwork to win. When those two elements exist in the right balance, great team chemistry is the result.

So how do you balance competing and completing? How do you learn to easily shift from one to the other? Here's what I recommend.

1. Acknowledge Your Natural Desire to Compete

About four or five years after I graduated from college, I went back to play in an alumni basketball game against the college's then-current team. Back when I played for the team, I had been a shooting guard, but this time they assigned me to cover the team's point guard. As I watched him in warm-ups, I knew I was in trouble. He was a lot faster than I was. So I quickly developed a strategy.

The first time he tried to take the ball inside to the hoop, I fouled him. I don't mean I tapped his hand as he shot the ball. I mean I really fouled him—hard. He got up, limped to the line for his free throws, and clanged both of them off the back of the rim. So far, so good.

The next time his team came down the floor and he tried to set up a shot from outside, I fouled him hard again. As he got up, he started grumbling under his breath.

Soon after that when there was a loose ball, I dove after it, but I also made sure I landed right on top of him. I wasn't as big then as I am now, but I was heavier than he was.

He popped up and barked at me, "You're playing too hard. It's only a game."

"Okay," I said with a grin, "then let me win."

It doesn't matter who you are or what you do, competitiveness is a natural leadership instinct. I haven't met a leader yet who didn't like to win. I look back now and recognize that I wasn't very mature. The good news is that the alumni team won the game. The bad news is that I didn't make a friend that day.

The key to being competitive is channeling it in a positive way. If you squash it, you lose an edge that motivates you to do some of your best work. If you let it run wild, you run over your teammates and alienate them. But if you control it and direct it, competitiveness can help you succeed.

2. EMBRACE HEALTHY COMPETITION

Every winning team I've ever seen or been a part of experienced healthy competition among team members. Healthy competition does so many positive things for a team, many of which cannot be achieved through anything else.

HEALTHY COMPETITION HELPS BRING OUT YOUR BEST. How many world records do you suppose are set when a runner runs alone? I don't know of one! People function at peak capacity when they have someone else pushing them. That's true whether you're learning, practicing, or playing in the game.

HEALTHY COMPETITION PROMOTES HONEST ASSESSMENT. What is the quickest way for you to measure your effectiveness in your profession? Maybe you have long-term measurements in place, such as monthly or yearly goals. But what if you want to know how you're doing today? How would

you go about measuring it? You could look at your to-do list. But what if you set the bar too low for yourself? You could ask your boss. But maybe the best way would be to see what others in your line of work are doing. If you are significantly behind or ahead of them, wouldn't that tell you something? And if you were behind, wouldn't you try to figure out what you're doing wrong? It may not be the only way to assess yourself, but it certainly can provide a good reality check.

HEALTHY COMPETITION CREATES CAMARADERIE. When people compete together, it often creates a connection between them, whether they are on the same team or opposing teams. When competition is ongoing and friendly on the same team, it creates an even stronger bond that can lead to great camaraderie.

HEALTHY COMPETITION DOESN'T BECOME PERSONAL. Competition between teammates is ultimately about having fun. When competition is healthy, teammates remain friends when the game is done. They play against each other for the thrill of it, and when they're done, they can walk away together without hard feelings.

I love the joke about the rooster who dragged an ostrich egg into the henhouse. He laid it down for all the hens to see and said, "I don't want to intimidate you girls, but I just want to show you what they're doing up the road." Competition can definitely help motivate a team to get going.

3. PUT COMPETITION IN ITS PROPER PLACE

The whole goal of healthy competition is to leverage it for the corporate win. Competition in practice helps teammates to

improve one another for game day. If it is channeled correctly, it is used to beat the other team.

The whole goal of healthy competition is to leverage it for the corporate win.

Of course, some leaders can take this to the extreme. Tommy Lasorda, former manager of the Los Angeles Dodgers, has told the story about the day his team was scheduled to play on the road against the Cincinnati Reds. In the morning, Lasorda went to mass. As he settled into his pew, the manager of the Reds, Johnny McNamara, happened to come into the same church and sit down in the same pew.

The men eyed one another, but neither spoke.

When mass was over, they had begun to walk out when Lasorda discovered that the other manager had paused to light a candle. He figured that gave the Reds an edge. "When he left, I went down and blew that candle out," Lasorda said. "All throughout the game, I kept hollering to him, 'Hey, Mac, it ain't gonna work. I blew it out.' We clobbered them that day, 13–2."

4. KNOW WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE

No matter how much you desire to win, if you want to cultivate the ability to compete in a healthy way, you must make sure you never cross the line by "going for the throat" with your peers, because if you do, you will alienate them. And that line is not difficult to define. I'd say that when competitiveness raises the bar and makes others better, that's healthy. Anytime it lowers morale and hurts the team, it's

unhealthy and out of line.

When I was leading Skyline Church in the San Diego area, my staff was very competent and very competitive. The core group who always led the charge consisted of Dan Reiland, Sheryl Fleisher, and Tim Elmore. They all had their own departments and own areas of expertise, but they were always competing, always trying to one-up each other. Their friendly competition kept them on their toes, and it inspired the rest of the staff to join in and do their best. But as hard-driving and competitive as they were, if any one of them had a problem, the others were right there, ready to jump in and lend a hand. They always put the team's win ahead of their own.

Today those three leaders are out doing different things in different organizations across the country, but they remain friends. They keep in touch, share stories, and still help one another whenever they can. The kind of bond that develops when you compete together doesn't die easily. They have a deep respect for each other that continues to give them credibility—and influence—with one another.

Lead-Across Principle #3

BE A FRIEND

We often consider ourselves to be many things to the people who work alongside us—coworkers, teammates, contributors, competitors—but we often forget to be the one thing that every person wants: a friend. Poet Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "The glory of friendship is not in the outstretched hand, nor the kindly smile, nor the joy of companionship; it is in the spiritual inspiration that comes to one when he discovers that someone else believes in him and is willing to trust him."

No matter how driven or competitive your coworkers appear to be, they will enjoy having a friend on the job. Some people don't look to the workplace for friendship, but they will certainly benefit from finding it there. When a job is especially tough or unpleasant, having a friend is sometimes the only thing a person has to look forward to when going to work. And when the job is good, then having a friend is icing on the cake.

TO TEAMWORK, ADD FRIENDSHIP

Why do I recommend that you work to develop friendships on the job?

Friendship Is the Foundation of Influence

President Abraham Lincoln said, "If you would win a man to your cause, first convince him that you are his sincere friend." Good relationships make influence possible, and friendship is the most positive relationship you can develop on the job with your coworkers.

Friendship Is The Framework for Success

I believe long-term success is unachievable without good people skills. Theodore Roosevelt said, "The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people." Without it, most achievements are not possible, and even what we do achieve can feel hollow.

Friendship Is the Shelter Against Sudden Storms

If you're having a bad day, who can make you feel better? A friend. When you have to face your fears, who would you rather do it with? A friend. When you fall on your face, who can help pick you up? A friend. Aristotle was right when he said, "True friends are a sure refuge."

How to Be a Friend

Undoubtedly, you already have friends, so you know how to develop friendships. But relationships at work can often be

different, and I want to suggest a specific way that you should approach friendship within your organization. Make it your goal to be a friend, not to find a friend.

When most people approach friendships, they look for people who will reciprocate their efforts at relationship building, and if they don't sense any kind of mutual effort, they abandon their efforts with that individual and move on. At work, if you want to lead across, you need to keep working at being a friend—even with people who don't initially put any effort into being a friend back.

As you reach out to your coworkers, I want to encourage you to include the following steps in the approach you take:

1. LISTEN!

Author Richard Exley once said:

> A true friend is one who hears and understands when you share your deepest feelings. He supports you when you are struggling; he corrects you, gently and with love, when you err; and he forgives you when you fail. A true friend prods you to personal growth, stretches you to your full potential. And most amazing of all, he celebrates your successes as if they were his own.

That entire process begins with listening.

Many people on the job just want to be left alone so that they can get their work done. If they do desire to interact with others, it's often to jockey for position or to get others to listen to what they have to say. How rare it is when people go out of their way and make it a point to listen to others.

Ralph Nichols said, "The most basic of all human needs is

the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them." If you become a consistently good listener to your coworkers, they will want to spend time with you. They will begin to seek you out. And if they develop a rapport with you, they will probably also begin asking advice from you. That is the starting point for influence with them.

2. Find Common Ground Not Related to Work

Frank A. Clark said, "To enjoy a friend, I need more in common with him than hating the same people." Unfortunately, for many people who work together, that's all they seem to have in common. So what's the solution if you don't seem to share common ground with someone at work? Try to discover what you have in common outside of the job.

If you see everyone as a potential friend, and look for connection points inside and outside of work, you have a good chance of finding common ground. And that is where friendships are built.

3. Be Available Beyond Business Hours

Just as you need to find common ground outside of work to become a friend to coworkers, you also need to make yourself available outside of business hours. True friendship means being available.

If you won't do anything outside of work hours, then your

relationship will probably never evolve beyond the confines of the work arena. The moment you take your relationship with a coworker outside of the work environment, it instantly begins to change. Think about the first time you had lunch with a coworker off-site. Even if you talked about work the entire time, didn't it change the way you saw that person from then on? How about if you've ever played in a work softball league or played golf with coworkers? Didn't you learn many things about people that you never knew before? Didn't you gain insights into personalities that were unrevealed until then? Think about the first time you went to a coworker's house, and consider the personal connection you felt with that person afterward.

True friendship isn't on the clock. When a friend is in need, real friends don't say, "It's after five. Can you call me back tomorrow?" Obviously, you want to respect people's privacy, and you don't want to violate anybody's personal boundaries. But because leadership isn't limited to nine to five, friendship can't be either.

4. Have a Sense of Humor

Comic pianist Victor Borge said, "Laughter is the closest distance between two people." I have often found that to be true. Humor can quickly bond people who might not otherwise have a lot in common.

Charlie Wetzel said that when he went to graduate school to work on his master's degree at age twenty-four, he was a painfully serious person. He took himself—and everything else in life—way too seriously. But during his second year in

school, he became a teaching assistant, and he got to know some of his fellow graduate students who were also teaching English composition classes for the University of New Orleans. One of those people was Homer Arrington.

Homer had grown up in Southern California, gone to school at Berkeley, and then done a variety of interesting jobs, including driving a cab in New York City for a couple of years. As all fourteen of the grad students would gather in their communal office, they would trade stories of their experiences in class and the troubles they were dealing with. Homer was a good student and an intellectual, but he also had a great sense of humor. When Charlie would tell a story about something that had really irritated him, Homer would see the humor in it, make jokes, and they both would end up laughing.

Though the two men initially had little in common, they quickly became friends. Now, twenty years later, Charlie credits Homer with helping him not take himself so seriously and with reawakening his sense of humor, something for which he continues to be grateful.

"Your best friend is he who brings out the best that is within you."
—HENRY FORD

If you maintain a sense of humor—even when times are tough, the job gets rough, and your coworkers are feeling out of sorts—you will help to create a positive atmosphere and will appear approachable and accessible to your coworkers. And that certainly will help your chances of making a friend.

5. Tell the Truth When Others Don't

Once when Henry Ford was having lunch with a man, he asked, "Who is your best friend?" When the man responded that he wasn't sure, Ford exclaimed, "I will tell you!" He took out a pencil and wrote his answer on the tablecloth: "Your best friend is he who brings out the best that is within you."

That is what friends do for one another. They bring out their best. Often their best is brought out by encouragement, but sometimes the best thing you can do for friends is tell them the truth. Not everybody is willing to do that, because they don't want to risk the relationship, or they really don't care enough to make the effort.

An eastern proverb says, "A friend is one who warns you." When you're headed for trouble, a friend lets you know. When you're blinded by your emotions, a friend tells you. When the quality of your work is hurting the organization or may hurt your career, a friend tells you the truth.

Stepping forward and telling people hard truths can be a risky thing. The irony is that in order for someone to listen to what you have to say about such things, you first need to have relational credibility with them. So it's kind of a catch-22. If you don't tell them, you're not really being a friend. But in order to tell them, you must already be a friend, or they won't accept what you have to say. The more relational currency you have deposited with them, the better the chance they will listen to what you have to say.

Charles Schwab, who started out as a stake driver and worked his way up to the job of president of Carnegie Steel (and later U.S. Steel) was said to be an incredible leader and a

master motivator. He saw the value of friendship in every aspect of life, including work. Schwab said:

> Be friends with everybody. When you have friends you will know there is somebody who will stand by you. You know the old saying, that if you have a single enemy you will find him everywhere. It doesn't pay to make enemies. Lead the life that will make you kind and friendly to everyone about you, and you will be surprised what a happy life you will live.

And you will also be surprised by the influence you will earn with your peers.

Lead-Across Principle #4

AVOID OFFICE POLITICS

A politician arrived late for a speaking engagement where he was scheduled as the keynote speaker. Usually he did his homework on the area and the organization, but because of his busy schedule, he had not been able to do it. He was rushed in as the attendees were finishing their dessert and taken immediately to the podium without having the chance to speak to anyone.

When he was introduced to the crowd, there was nothing he could do but dive in. With the bright lights shining in his eyes, he immediately launched into one of the main issues of the campaign and spoke at length. When he paused for a moment, the gentleman who had introduced him whispered that the group to whom he was speaking was on the opposite side of the issue.

Without missing a beat, the politician said, "My friends. Now that I have explained the opposition's position in great detail, I will tell you the truth."

Some people seeking public office may be able to get away with such tactics—though usually it backfires on them—but people in a working environment where their peers know them certainly cannot. Playing politics at work is a surefire way to alienate your peers.

I would define "playing politics" as changing who you

appear to be or what you normally do to gain an advantage with whoever currently has power. Among those who run for public office, that often means changing their position on issues depending on which group they're speaking to. In work environments, it may mean sucking up to the boss, constantly changing positions to get on the winning side, or using people for personal gain without regard for how it affects them. Political people are fickle and opportunistic, doing what's expedient in the moment to win, regardless of what's best for their peers, their employees, or the organization.

Two Ways to Get Ahead

There seem to be two main paths for people to get ahead in organizations. One way is to try to get ahead by doing the work. The other is to try to get ahead by working an angle. It's the difference between production and politics.

People Who Rely on Production	People Who Rely on Poli
Depend on how they grow	Depend on who they knov
Focus on what they do	Focus on what they say
Become better than they appear	Appear better than they ar
Provide substance	Take shortcuts
Do what's necessary	Do what's popular
Work to control their own destiny	Let others control their desti
Grow into the next level	Hope to be given the next le
Base decisions on principles	Base decisions on opinion

The bottom line is that people who might be described as

"political" are ruled by their desire to get ahead instead of a desire for excellence, productivity, teamwork, or consistency. Whatever values and skills they have are secondary to their ambition. And while they sometimes appear to get ahead, their gains are always temporary. In the long run, integrity, consistency, and productivity always pay off—in better teamwork and a clear conscience.

If you have played politics at work in the past, perhaps you saw others do it and you thought that was what you had to do to advance in your career. Or maybe you didn't have confidence in yourself because you weren't growing, and your skills were not advancing. You may not have done it maliciously, but whatever the reason, if you have played politics, you can be certain that you have betrayed the trust of some of your coworkers. And you will probably have to go to those people to apologize and seek reconciliation. That may be hard, but if you desire to lead across, you will need to do it to regain credibility with your peers.

If you are not a political person by nature, I still recommend that you exercise caution. Some working environments seem to draw people toward behavior that will ultimately damage peer-to-peer relationships. To avoid such difficulties, do the following:

1. Avoid Gossip

It's been said that great people talk about ideas, average people talk about themselves, and small people talk about others. That's what gossip does. It makes people small. There really is no upside to gossip. It diminishes the person being

talked about. It diminishes the person who is saying unkind things about others, and it even diminishes the listener. That's why you should avoid not only spreading gossip but also being a recipient of it. If you stop people from unloading gossip on you, it will make you feel better about the person who's being talked about, as well as about yourself. Besides, whoever gossips to you will gossip about you.

British prime minister Winston Churchill said, "When the eagles are silent, the parrots begin to jabber." 360-Degree Leaders are like eagles: they soar; they inspire; they fly high. And they don't talk just to hear themselves. They don't vent about someone to others to make themselves feel better. If they have a problem with a person, they go to that individual and address the issue directly—never through a third party. They praise publicly and criticize privately. And they never say anything about others that they wouldn't want them to hear—because they probably will.

Great people talk about ideas, average people talk about themselves, and small people talk about others.

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2. STAY AWAY FROM PETTY ARGUMENTS

In most places where people work, there are past grudges, ongoing feuds, and petty arguments that run like currents through the organization. Wise leaders in the middle of an organization avoid getting sucked into these easily, even if they think they can resolve them. As the saying goes, a bulldog can beat a skunk in a fight anytime, but he knows it's just not worth it. That's also the attitude of 360-Degree

Leaders.

Recently I received an e-mail from Marvin "Skip" Schoenhals, chairman and president of Wilmington Savings Fund Society, whom I had met while I was speaking at a CEO forum in Dallas, Texas. When I met Skip, he told me a little bit about himself, and I asked him to write me and share more of his story. He wrote about how he once lived in Owosso, Michigan, and served on the seven-member city council. Skip said he had a knack for seeing the big picture and synthesizing many points of view. He wrote:

> I was often able to summarize issues quickly and move the group to a higher, less detailed level of discussion. As a result, fellow council members increasingly sought my opinion on various matters coming before the council.
>
> While I recognized that this was happening, I never attempted to capitalize on it. I was willing to speak my mind, but I would in the end defer to the mayor. Further, I would also pick my spots. Sometimes even if I thought that the council was not on the right big-picture item, I didn't always jump in. I let some issues go, even though I did not agree with them. I realized I gained credibility by not having an opinion on everything.

Skip went on to tell about how in a year's time, he became the informal leader of the council and then later the mayor.

It is a sign of maturity when someone knows what's petty and what's not—when to jump in, and when to sit back and listen. If you desire to become effective as a 360-Degree Leader, you will need to cultivate that kind of ability.

3. Stand Up For What's Right, Not Just for

WHAT'S POPULAR

While I believe that wise leaders often sit back and listen, I also believe that leaders must stand up for what's right, even when such a stand will be unpopular. How do you do that? How do you know when to stand up and when not to, especially in a culture where many people see truth as subjective? My answer is that you use the Golden Rule: in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.[1]

In *Ethics 101*, I explained that a form of the Golden Rule is accepted by nearly every culture in the world. Besides Christianity, the religions that have some version of the Golden Rule include Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Zoroastriansim, Confucianism, Baha'i, and Jainism, among others. When someone is being treated in a way that you would not want to be treated, then it's time to stand up.

4. LOOK AT ALL SIDES OF THE ISSUE

I love this piece of business advice: before you have an argument with your boss, take a good look at both sides—his side and the outside. While seeing things from multiple points of view with your peers may not have as important stakes as seeing things from your boss's point of view, there is still great value in seeing issues from as many sides as possible. It always pays to avoid being dogmatic or stuck in one box in your thinking.

One of the advantages of leading from the middle of an organization is that you have the opportunity to see things

from perspectives that many others don't. Leaders at the top of the organization often have a difficult time seeing anything other than the big picture or the bottom line. Those on the bottom are equally limited, often seeing only the issues of their area. But leaders in the middle have a better perspective. They see how any given issue impacts them, but they are also able to look up and down. They are close to the people in the trenches and can see things from their point of view, and they are close enough to the top to see at least some of the big picture. 360-Degree Leaders make the most of this perspective to lead not only up and down, but also across.

Before you have an argument with your boss, take a good look at both sides—his side and the outside.

5. Don't Protect Your Turf

Politics is often about power. Political leaders protect whatever is theirs because they don't want to lose power. If they lose power, then they might not win. And as I already mentioned, winning is their primary motivation. People who want to win at all costs fight and scrap to keep everything that belongs to them. They fight for their budget. They fight for office space. They guard their ideas. They hoard their supplies. If it belongs to them, they protect it.

People who want to lead across take a broader view. They look at what's best for the team. If they have to give up some space to help the organization, they do it. If it makes more sense for another leader to accomplish a task they've done in the past—and if some of the dollars from their budget also go

to that leader—they deal with it. What matters is the team.

6. Say What You Mean, and Mean What You Say

Like every other kind of leadership, becoming a 360-Degree Leader is about building trust with people. When asked what he considered the most essential qualification for a politician, Winston Churchill said, "It's the ability to foretell what will happen tomorrow, next month, and next year—and to explain afterward why it did not happen." Churchill understood the dynamics of politics as well as anyone in the twentieth century. Political leaders find themselves under tremendous pressure. Maybe that's why some of them crack under it and tell people what they want to hear rather than what the politicians really believe. And those who do crack create a negative reputation that all politicians have to labor under.

If you want to develop trust with others, you must be more than competent. You must also be credible and consistent. The way to achieve those qualities is to make sure that what you *say,* what you *do,* and what you *say you do* all match. If you do that, the people who work with you will know they can depend on you.

I don't mean to cast a negative light on everyone involved in politics. I've known many candidates for public office who displayed the highest integrity and truly wanted to serve the people. But the word *politician*, which once conjured positive images, brings to mind negative ones for most people.

Instead of trying to be a politician, strive to be a statesman. *Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary* states:

> These terms differ particularly in their connotations; *Politician* suggests the schemes and devices of a person who engages in (esp. small) politics for party ends or for one's own advantage; a dishonest politician. *Statesman* suggests the eminent ability, foresight, and unselfish patriotic devotion of a person dealing with (esp. important or great) affairs of state: a distinguished statesman.[2]

Becoming a statesman for your organization is an excellent idea. If you continually keep the big picture in mind, remain unselfish in your efforts, and try to be a diplomat with your peers, you will distinguish yourself, gain credibility, and improve your effectiveness and that of the team. And you will also increase your influence.

Lead-Across Principle #5

EXPAND YOUR CIRCLE OF ACQUAINTANCES

In 1997, I relocated my companies from San Diego, California, to Atlanta, Georgia. In the wake of that move, I felt that I needed to expand my circle of acquaintances into the African-American community, which was really a new world for me.

I grew up in a small town in Ohio in the 1950s and '60s where not many people of color lived. The first ten years of my career I worked primarily in rural Indiana and Ohio—middle America. The next fifteen years I worked in Southern California. There I was introduced to the Hispanic culture and its people, and I led a church that included persons of many backgrounds; but once again, there were not a lot of African-Americans. Even in the conferences I taught around the country, only a small percentage of participants were African-American. So when I got to Atlanta, in the heart of the Deep South, I knew it was time for me to expand my horizons and grow in this area.

I knew someone in Atlanta who I hoped would help me with this: Dr. Samuel Chand. Sam is the chancellor of Beulah Heights Bible College, a multiracial college with a student population that is predominantly African-American. I asked Sam if he would be willing to introduce me to influential African-American leaders from the area, which he said he

would gladly do. From then on, every other month I attended a lunch that he arranged with different leaders from that community.

It has been a wonderful growing experience for me. I've met a lot of terrific people, such as Bishop Eddie Long, an excellent leader of one of Atlanta's largest churches; Corretta Scott King and her children; and many others. A few people knew me by reputation, but most of these leaders did not. I've had a great time connecting with them. I could tell that a few people wondered if I had some kind of unspoken agenda, but I think they quickly accepted that my desire was to learn—and to add value to them if I could. That is my mind-set anytime I meet someone new. At times during those lunches I was taken out of my comfort zone, yet I'm glad to say I learned much about the African-American community and have developed wonderful relationships with many of my new friends.

It's always easier to stay within environments where we are comfortable and secure. In fact, that's what most people do. They avoid change and remain where it's safe. But you can't grow and avoid change at the same time. It just doesn't work that way. If you want to expand your influence, you have to expand your circle of acquaintances.

Expanding your circle of acquaintances may be uncomfortable, but it can do a lot for you. First, it helps you improve. Expanding your circle will expose you to new ideas. It will prompt you to see things from a different point of view, which will help you generate new ideas of your own. It will help you to learn new working methods and pick up additional skills. And it will help you to become more innovative.

Expanding your circle also has another valuable benefit. It

expands your network, putting you into contact with more people and giving you potential access to their networks, something Yahoo chief solutions officer Tim Sanders describes in *Love Is the Killer App*. Sanders wrote:

> In the twenty-first century, our success will be based on the people we know. Everyone in our address book is a potential partner for every person we meet . . . Relationships are nodes in our individual network that constitute the promise of our bizlife and serve as a predictor of our success. Some of the brightest new-economy luminaries, such as Kevin Kelly (*New Rules for the New Economy*), or Larry Downes and Chunka Mui (*Unleashing the Killer App*), argue that companies, organizations, and individuals comprise, and are most highly valued for, their web of relationships. If you organize and leverage your relationships as a network, you will generate long-lasting value (and peace of mind) beyond your stock options, mutual funds, and bank accounts. You will also create a value proposition for new contacts, which in turn drives membership in that network—the prime law of business ecosystems, known as the Law of Network Effects. Value explodes with membership . . . When we are fully and totally networked, we are powerful.[1]

Sanders believes that along with knowledge and compassion, your network is your most valuable asset.

How to Expand Your Circle

Each of us has a natural circle of people we're comfortable with. Those people comprise our relational comfort zone. Perhaps you enjoy meeting people and already make it a practice to get out and connect with individuals outside of your circle. If that is the case, keep it up. The more broadly you connect with people, the greater your potential to influence—

and be positively influenced by—others.

If you are not inclined to stretch yourself relationally, then think about this. People are like rubber bands. They are most valuable when they are stretched, not when they are at rest. Your value as a leader in the middle will increase as you stretch and get out of your comfort zone relationships, which are usually comprised of:

- People that you've known for a long time;
- People with whom you have common experiences; and
- People that you know like you.

What would happen if the number of people in your circle expanded from five to fifty or from a dozen to more than a hundred? When you had a question your coworkers and you couldn't answer, how quickly do you think you could get it from someone you know? If a friend were looking for a job, how much more likely would it be for you to help her connect with someone who might be looking for help? If you were trying to break into a new market, wouldn't it be likely that you could call an acquaintance and get a quick overview of that industry—or at least call someone who has a friend in that industry? You would even have quicker access to information on the best restaurants in town, the best vacation spots, or where to buy a car. And with every quick connection you are able to make or share with a colleague, the more value you would have—and more influence you would gain—with your peers.

If you desire to expand your circle of acquaintances, all you

need are a strategy and a will to do it. You must provide the effort, but I will be glad to give you the following ideas to help you with the strategy.

1. Expand Beyond Your Inner Circle

To get outside of your comfort zone, why not start with those in your comfort zone? Every friend you have has a friend you don't have. Begin with your inner-circle friends, and expand the pool. What businesses are your closest friends in? Whom do they know who might benefit you? Think about the interesting people you've heard friends talk about. Also consider their interests. Who have they connected with through their hobbies and travels?

To get outside of your comfort zone, why not start with those in your comfort zone? Every friend you have has a friend you don't have.

I bet for each of your friends, you could come up with a list of at least three or four—and in some cases as many as a dozen—people you would have interest in meeting through them. And chances are they would have just as much interest in meeting you! Why not start asking your friends to introduce you to some of them? Ask them to set up a lunch, as I did with Sam Chand. Or ask if you can tag along as friends engage in their hobbies. Or simply ask for a phone number and make contact yourself.

You'll be amazed by how quickly your circle expands in this first round. You can double, triple, or quadruple your circle of

acquaintances almost overnight. And once you do expand the pool of people you know, be sure to touch base with your new contacts periodically so that you remain connected.

2. Expand Beyond Your Expertise

I obviously value people who have experience in my field. In fact, I recommend that you "talk your craft" with others who share expertise in your area. But you should never limit yourself to connecting with people within your department or profession.

If you work in an organization of any size, one large enough to have multiple departments, then I recommend that you start by connecting with people in the other departments. It doesn't matter what kind of an organization you're in, when there is connection and understanding between departments, everyone wins. When the sales and accounting people develop relationships and grasp what each other does, when the waitstaff and the cooks get along in a restaurant, when marketing department workers and engineers appreciate each other, it helps them, their customers, and the organization. Everybody wins.

3. Expand Beyond Your Strengths

Even outside of work, I think we all tend to respect and gravitate to people whose strengths are like our own. Sports stars hang out together. Actors marry other actors. Entrepreneurs enjoy trading stories with other entrepreneurs. The problem is that if you spend time only with people like

yourself, your world can become terribly small and your thinking limited.

If you are a creative type, go out of your way to meet people who are analytical. If you have a type-A personality, then learn to appreciate the strengths of people who are more laid back. If your thing is business, spend time with people who work in nonprofit environments. If you are white-collar, learn to connect with blue-collar people. Anytime you get a chance to meet people with strengths very different from your own, learn to celebrate their abilities and get to know them better. It will broaden your experience and increase your appreciation for people.

4. Expand Beyond Your Personal Prejudices

French novelist André Gide said that "an unprejudiced mind is probably the rarest thing in the world." Unfortunately, that is probably true. I think all human beings have prejudices of some sort. We prejudge people we haven't met because of their race, ethnicity, gender, occupation, nationality, religion, or associations. And it really does limit us.

If we desire to grow beyond not only our circle of acquaintances but also some of the limitations created by our own thoughts, then we need to break down the walls of prejudice that exist in our minds and hearts. Novelist Gwen Bristow said, "We can get the new world we want, if we want it enough to abandon our prejudices, every day, everywhere. We can build this world if we practice now what we said we were fighting for."

What group of people do you find yourself disliking or

mistrusting? Why do you hold such views? Has your vision been obscured by the actions of one or more individuals? The way to change your blanket likes and dislikes is to reach out to people of that group and try to find common ground with them. This may be the most difficult of all circles to break out of, but it is well worth doing.

5. Expand Beyond Your Routine

One of the greatest impediments to meeting new people is routine. We often go to the same places all the time—the same gas stations, coffee shop, grocery store, and restaurants. We employ the same providers of services. We use the same companies for our business. It's just easy. But sometimes we need to shake things up and try something new. It's all about getting outside of your comfort zone.

There are even times when getting out of your routine helps you stay connected with people you already know. In the spring of 2005, my companies, EQUIP and ISS, moved their offices to a new facility. In the past, both companies used office space that was separate, but well connected to each other though common halls. They also shared some work rooms, conference rooms, a lunchroom, and so forth.

The offices in their new location still occupy the same building, but they have become much more separate. They occupy two different suites, each with all of its own supporting spaces. A few weeks after the move, I was talking to Linda Eggers, my assistant who has worked with me for nearly twenty years, and she told me that the changes in the office had caused her to change her routine.

Whenever I talk to Linda, I ask her how things are going at work, because she always has a good feel for the atmosphere at the office, and she is usually aware of any issues that are occurring. But after the move, she remarked that EQUIP was so far removed from her normal routine, that she didn't have any idea how everybody was doing over on that side of the building. So Linda, who is very relational, made it her goal to break from her routine at least once a day to touch base with somebody on the EQUIP team. It's extra work, but she knows how valuable it can be.

I know that my ideas for expanding one's circle of influence may not be revolutionary. They're really just practical thoughts. But the whole point of this chapter is to remind you that you can't wait for life to come to you. You need to initiate, invest, and do what's right when you don't feel like it—especially when it comes to cultivating relationships.

I can't remember a single time I've regretted getting outside of my comfort zone and trying to get acquainted with someone I didn't know. Even if I failed to connect, or if there was no chemistry, or if the person turned out to be unpleasant, it always yielded some kind of benefit, either because I had a new experience, learned something new, or received an introduction to someone else I enjoyed meeting. It's an investment in time—and influence—that is always worth making.

Lead-Across Principle #6

LET THE BEST IDEA WIN

Imagine that you're getting ready to go into an important project meeting that will be attended by your boss and several people who are on the same level as you in the organization. Let's say that you were picked from among your peers by your boss to lead the meeting, and you see this time as your chance to shine. You've done your homework and then some. You've spent countless hours thinking through the project, brainstorming, planning, and endeavoring to foresee any obstacles that could be ahead. Based on your preliminary discussions with your staff and your peers, you feel that your ideas are better than anything you've heard from anyone else.

So you begin the meeting with great confidence. But before long, the agenda is not proceeding the way you expected or planned. Your boss makes a comment and sends the flow of the discussion in an entirely new direction. At first you think, *That's okay. I can salvage this. My ideas will still work; I just need to steer everyone back around to them.*

And then one of your peers launches in with an idea. You don't think much of it, but everyone else seems to think it's wonderful. A couple of other people in the room springboard off of that initial idea and begin to build on it. You can feel the energy in the room starting to build. Ideas are sparking. And everyone is clearly moving away from everything you've spent

weeks planning—the idea that was your "baby."

What do you do?

For most people in those circumstances, their natural instinct would be to fight for their ideas. After all, by then they would have made quite an investment in them, such as the following:

- *The Intellectual Investment*—it takes hours of thinking, planning, and problem solving spent to gather, create, and refine an idea.

- *The Physical Investment*—getting ready for an important meeting or presentation usually takes a lot of time, effort, and resources.

- *The Emotional Investment*—when people come up with something they see as a good idea, it's hard to keep themselves from thinking about not only what the idea could do for the company but also what it could do for them and their careers.

By this time, they become pretty attached to their ideas, and it becomes difficult to let those ideas die, especially when someone else who didn't do any work may come in and get all the credit.

IDEAS: THE LIFEBLOOD OF AN ORGANIZATION

If you desire to become a 360-Degree Leader, then you need to resist the temptation to fight for your idea when

If you desire to become a 360-Degree Leader, then you need to resist the temptation to fight for your idea when it's not the best idea. Why? Because good ideas are too important to the organization. Harvey Firestone, founder of the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, said, "Capital isn't so important in business. Experience isn't so important. You can get both of these. What is important is ideas. If you have ideas, you have the main asset you need, and there isn't any limit to what you can do with your business and your life. They are any man's greatest asset—ideas."

Great organizations possess leaders throughout the organization who produce great ideas. That is how they become great. The progress they make and the innovations they create don't come down from on high. Their creative sessions are not dominated by top-down leaders. Nor does every meeting become a kind of wrestling match to see who can dominate everyone else. People come together as teams, peers work together, and they make progress because they want the best idea to win.

"Capital isn't so important in business. Experience isn't so important. You can get both of these. What is important is ideas."
—HARVEY FIRESTONE

Leaders in the middle of the organization who help to surface good ideas are creating what an organization needs most. They do that by producing synergy among their peers. And they will

develop influence with their peers because when they are present, they make the whole team better.

WHAT LEADS TO THE BEST IDEAS?

To let the best idea win, you must first generate good ideas. And then you must work to make them even better. How do 360-Degree Leaders do that? How do they help the team find the best ideas? I believe 360-Degree Leaders follow this pattern:

1. 360-DEGREE LEADERS LISTEN TO ALL IDEAS

Finding good ideas begins with an open-minded willingness to listen to all ideas. Mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead said, "Almost all really new ideas have a certain aspect of foolishness when they are first produced." During the brainstorming process, shutting down any ideas might prevent you from discovering the good ones.

In *Thinking for a Change*, one of the eleven thinking skills I recommend people learn is shared thinking. It is faster than solo thinking, is more innovative, and has greater value. Most important, I believe, is the fact that great thinking comes when good thoughts are shared in a collaborative environment where people contribute to them, shape them, and take them to the next level. A 360-Degree Leader helps to create such an environment.

"Almost all really new ideas have a certain aspect of foolishness when they are first produced."

—ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD

2. 360-DEGREE LEADERS NEVER SETTLE FOR JUST ONE IDEA

I think many times leaders are too quick to settle on one idea and run with it. That is because leaders are so action oriented. They want to go. They want to make something happen. They want to take the hill! The problem is that they sometimes fight their way to the top of the hill only to find that it's not the right one.

One idea is never enough. Many ideas make us stronger. I once heard an analyst say he thought that was the reason the communist bloc fell at the end of the twentieth century. Communism created a system based primarily on only one idea. If anyone tried to do things a different way, they were knocked down or shipped out.

In contrast, democracy is a system based on a multitude of ideas. If people want to try something different, they have the chance to float their idea and see what happens. If it catches on, it moves forward. If not, it is replaced by another idea. Because of that freedom, in democratic countries creativity is high, opportunities are unlimited, and the potential for growth is astounding. The democratic system can be messy, but that is also true of any endeavor that's creative and collaborative.

The same kind of free-market mentality that drives the largest economy in the world can also drive organizations. If people are open to ideas and options, they can keep growing, innovating, and improving.

3. 360-Degree Leaders Look in Unusual Places For Ideas

Good leaders are attentive to ideas; they are always searching for them. And they cultivate that attentiveness and practice it as a regular discipline. As they read the newspaper, watch a movie, listen to their colleagues, or enjoy a leisure activity, they are always on the lookout for ideas or practices they can use to improve their work and their leadership.

If you desire to find good ideas, you have to search for them. Rarely does a good idea come looking for you.

4. 360-Degree Leaders Don't Let Personality Overshadow Purpose

When someone you don't like or respect suggests something, what is your first reaction? I bet it's to dismiss it. You've heard the phrase, "Consider the source." That's not a bad thing to do, but if you're not careful, you may very likely throw out the good with the bad.

Don't let the personality of someone you work with cause you to lose sight of the greater purpose, which is to add value to the team and advance the organization. If that means listening to the ideas of people with whom you have no chemistry, or worse, a difficult history, so be it. Set aside your pride and listen. And in cases where you must reject the ideas of others, make sure you reject only the idea and not the person.

5. 360-Degree Leaders Protect Creative People and Their Ideas

Ideas are such fragile things, especially when they first come to light. Advertising executive Charlie Brower said, "A new idea is delicate. It can be killed by a sneer or a yawn; it can be stabbed to death by a quip and worried to death by a frown on the right man's brow."

If you desire the best idea to win, then become a champion of creative people and their contributions to your organization. When you discover peers who are creative, promote them, encourage them, and protect them. Pragmatic people often shoot down the ideas of creative people. 360-Degree Leaders who value creativity can help the creative people around them to thrive and keep generating ideas that benefit the organization.

6. 360-Degree Leaders Don't Take Rejection Personally

When your ideas are not received well by others, do your best not to take it personally. When someone in a meeting does that, it can kill the creative process, because at that point the discussion is no longer about the ideas or helping the organization; it becomes about the person whose feelings are hurt. In those moments if you can stop competing and focus your energy on creating, you will open the way for the people around you to take their creativity to the next level.

When I give this advice, I'm not just offering up platitudes. I've had to adopt the right attitude when it comes to ideas, and

I can give you an example of where I've had to set aside my own wants and desires and accept the creativity of others. If you don't have any personal experience in the publishing world, then I'm guessing that you believe authors always select the titles of their books. While that may be the way it works for some authors, it has not been the case for me. I've written more than forty books, yet I think I've selected the titles for about a dozen of them. Following is a list of the last nine trade books I've written. Of those, I've selected the title of only one.

The 360-Degree Leader	I wanted to call it *Leading from the Middl the Pack.*
25 Ways to Win with People	Les Parrott came up with the concept and t
Winning with People	Charlie Wetzel came up with that title.
Today Matters	I wanted to call it *The Secret of Your Succ*
Thinking for a Change	I wanted to call it *Thinking Your Way to t Top.*
The 17 Essential Qualities of a Team Player	The team at Thomas Nelson picked that ti
The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork	I got to pick the title of this book!
The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader	The concept and title were developed in a marketing meeting.
The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership	The concept and title came from Victor Ol my editor.

A book is a pretty personal thing for an author. Why would I allow someone else to pick the title? Because I know my ideas aren't always the best ideas. I often think they are, but when everyone in the room has a different opinion, it pays to listen.

That's why I've adopted the attitude that the company owner doesn't need to win—the best idea does.

Mel Newhoff is executive vice president of Bozell Worldwide, a top advertising agency. In his industry, ideas are everything. Newhoff has some good advice about the big picture concerning ideas and how to approach your interaction with others in relation to them:

Be passionate about your work and have the integrity to stand up for your ideas. But also know when to compromise.

Without passion you will not be taken seriously. If you don't defend your ideas, no one else will either. When principle is involved, don't budge.

But there is another side to this also. There are very few real "absolutes" in life. Most matters involve taste or opinion, not principle. In these areas recognize that you can compromise. If you become someone who can never compromise, you will forfeit opportunities to those who can.

Being a 360-Degree Leader and leading across is not about getting your own way. It's not about winning at all costs. It's about winning respect and influence with your peers so that you can help the whole team win. Should you be passionate and determined, believing in yourself and your ability to contribute? Definitely. Should you hold on to your deeply held values and stand on principle when those are in jeopardy? Absolutely. But never forget that having a collaborative spirit helps the organization. When you think in terms of *our* idea instead of *my* idea or *her* idea, you're probably on track to helping the team win. That should be your motivation, not just trying to win friends and influence people. But I think you'll

find that if you let the best idea win, you will win friends and influence people.

Lead-Across Principle #7

DON'T PRETEND YOU'RE PERFECT

Nothing would get done at all if a man waited until he could do something so well that no one could find fault with it.
—JOHN HENRY CARDINAL NEWMAN

A man who had been suffering from constant headaches finally went to see his doctor.

"I don't know why I keep getting these terrible headaches," he lamented. "I don't drink like so many other people do. I don't smoke like so many other people do. I don't run around at night like so many other people do. I don't overeat like so many other people do. I don't—"

At this point, the doctor interrupted him. "Tell me," the physician asked, "this pain you complain of, is it a sharp shooting pain?"

"Yes," the man answered.

"And does it hurt here, here, and here?" the doctor asked indicating three places around his head.

"Yes," the man replied hopefully, "that's it exactly."

"Simple," the doctor said, rendering his diagnosis. "Your problem is that you have your halo on too tight."

Many leaders are similar to the man in that joke. They try so hard to make others think they're perfect that it about kills them. The problem, to quote Norman Cousins, longtime editor of the *Saturday Review*, is that "to talk about the need for perfection in man is to talk about the need for another species."

How to Be "Real" in a Competitive Environment

One of the worst things leaders can do is expend energy on trying to make others think they're perfect. That's true whether the leader is CEO or functioning in the middle of the organization. It's a crock. The closest to perfection people ever come is when they write their resumés. Since nobody is perfect —not you, not your peers, not your boss—we need to quit pretending. People who are real, who are genuine concerning their weaknesses as well as their strengths, draw others to them. They engender trust. They are approachable. And they are a breath of fresh air in an environment where others are scrambling to reach the top by trying to look good.

Here's how I recommend you approach "getting real" to become a more effective 360-Degree Leader:

1. Admit Your Faults

Recently at a forum for CEOs where I was invited to speak, I suggested to the leaders in attendance that they be honest

about their weaknesses and admit their faults to the people they work with when they returned to their companies. After I was done speaking, a CEO approached me because he wanted to talk about that remark.

"I can't believe you're suggesting we talk about our weaknesses with our people," he said. "I think that's a really bad idea."

When I asked him why, he answered, "A leader should never show weakness or fear. He should always be in control, in command. Otherwise his people lose confidence in him."

"I think you're laboring under a false assumption," I replied.

"What's that?" he said.

"You think your people don't know your weaknesses," I explained. "I'm not suggesting that you admit your faults to give your people information they don't already have. I'm suggesting it because it lets them know that you know your faults."

The people who work alongside you know your weaknesses, faults, and blind spots. If you doubt that—and you have great courage—just ask them! When you get real and admit your shortcomings, what you're doing is making yourself approachable and trustworthy. And when you make mistakes, admit them and quickly ask for forgiveness. Nothing is more disarming, and nothing does a better job of clearing the decks relationally.

2. Ask For Advice

It has been said that advice is what we ask for when we

already know the answer but wish we didn't. Isn't that often the case? Some people won't ask for advice when they don't have an answer because they are afraid it will make them look bad; they only ask advice if they can't make up their minds. How much more quickly would people get things done if they asked for help when they needed it instead of trying to fake it until they make it?

3. Worry Less About What Others Think

James C. Humes, in *The Wit and Wisdom of Winston Churchill* (Harper Perennial, 1994), told about an incident that occurred one day at the House of Commons. It is customary for members of parliament to expound, and then the prime minister is given an opportunity to respond to their comments. On this day, a member of the Socialist party railed against Prime Minister Churchill, pouring out abusive words against him. While the man spoke, Churchill remained impassive. He seemed almost bored. When the man was finished, Churchill rose and said, "If I valued the opinion of the honorable gentleman, I might get angry."

People who consider the opinions of others too much often perform too little. They get caught up in pleasing others. I know, because I used to be a people pleaser. Early in my career I was often more worried about what others thought of me than I was about doing what I knew to be best. But in the end, each of us has to live with ourselves. It took me a while, but I finally grasped that knowing in my heart I did right was more important than pleasing or impressing others. Failure is inevitable, so I might as well act in a way that allows me to

sleep well at night. Besides, one of the nice things about being imperfect is the joy that it brings to others!

One of the nice things about being imperfect is the joy that it brings to others!

If you want to gain credibility with your peers, you've got to be yourself. If you're genuine, will everyone like you? No. But pretending to be something you're not won't make everyone like you either. It will actually make you less likable.

4. Be Open to Learning from Others

Have you ever met someone who felt compelled to play the expert all the time? Such people aren't much fun to be around after a while, because the only input they seem open to is their own. And as the saying goes, people won't go along with you unless they can get along with you.

I love the way President Abraham Lincoln is said to have handled a person who had a know-it-all attitude. Lincoln asked, "How many legs will a sheep have if you call the tail a leg?"

"Five," the man answered.

"No," replied Lincoln, "he'll still have four, because calling a tail a leg doesn't make it one."

If you really desire others to see you as an approachable person, go a step beyond just willingness to admit your weaknesses. Be willing to learn from them. One of the things I teach in *Winning with People* is the Learning Principle, which states, "Each person we meet has the potential to teach us something." I really believe that. If you embrace that idea, I

believe you will discover two things. First, you will learn a lot, because every time you meet someone, it is a learning opportunity. Second, people will warm up to you. Complete strangers often treat me like an old friend, simply because I am open to them.

5. Put Away Pride and Pretense

Too often we think that if we can impress others, we will gain influence with them. We want to become others' heroes—to be larger than life. That creates a problem because we're real live human beings. People can see us for who we really are. If we make it our goal to impress them, we puff up our pride and end up being pretentious—and that turns people off.

If you want to influence others, don't try to impress them. Pride is really nothing more than a form of selfishness, and pretense is only a way to keep people at arm's length so that they can't see who you really are. Instead of impressing others, let them impress you.

It's really a matter of attitude. The people with charisma, those who attract others to themselves, are individuals who focus on others, not themselves. They ask questions of others. They listen. They don't try to be the center of attention. And they never try to pretend they're perfect.

Poet and Harvard professor Robert Hillyer said, "Perfectionism is a dangerous state of mind in an imperfect world. The best way is to forget doubts and set about the task at hand . . . If you are doing your best, you will not have time to worry about failure." That's good advice. If you always do

your best, your peers will respect you. And if they respect you, they will listen to you and give you a chance. And that's where leadership starts.

Section IV Review
The Principles 360Degree Leaders Need to Lead Across

Before you begin learning about leading down the 360Degree Leader way, review the seven principles you need to master in order to lead across:

1. Understand, practice, and complete the leadership loop.
2. Put completing fellow leaders ahead of competing with them.
3. Be a friend.
4. Avoid office politics.
5. Expand your circle of acquaintances.
6. Let the best idea win.
7. Don't pretend you're perfect.

How well are you doing those seven things? If you're not sure, take the 360Degree Leadership assessment, offered free of charge to people who have purchased this book. Go to 360DegreeLeader.com for more information.

SECTION V

THE PRINCIPLES 360-DEGREE LEADERS PRACTICE TO LEAD DOWN

"Follow me, I'll add value to you."

Leadership is traditionally thought of as a top-down activity. The leader leads; the followers follow. Simple. If you have been leading others for any length of time, you may be tempted to skip this section of the book, thinking, *I already know how to do that*. I don't want you to miss something really important, however. Because 360-Degree Leaders are by definition nonpositional, they lead through influence, not position, power, or leverage. And they take that approach not only with those above and alongside them, but also with those who work under them. This is what makes 360-Degree Leaders unique—and so effective. They take the time and effort to earn influence with their followers just as they do with those over whom they have no authority.

360-Degree Leaders take the time and effort to earn influence with their followers just as they do with those over whom they have no authority.

At the heart of this approach with followers is the desire to

add value to them. Retired Admiral James B. Stockdale said:

> Leadership must be based on goodwill. Goodwill does not mean posturing and, least of all, pandering to the mob. It means obvious and wholehearted commitment to helping followers. We are tired of leaders we fear, tired of leaders we love, and tired of leaders who let us take liberties with them. What we need for leaders are men of the heart who are so helpful that they, in effect, do away with the need of their jobs. But leaders like that are never out of a job, never out of followers. Strange as it sounds, great leaders gain authority by giving it away.

As a 360-Degree Leader, when you lead down, you're doing more than just getting people to do what you want. You're finding out who they are. You're helping them to discover and reach their potential. You're showing the way by becoming a model they can follow. You're helping them become a part of something bigger than they could do on their own. And you're rewarding them for being contributors on the team. In short, you are endeavoring to add value to them in any way you can.

Lead-Down Principle #1

WALK SLOWLY THROUGH THE HALLS

One of the greatest mistakes leaders make is spending too much time in their offices and not enough time out among the people. Leaders are often agenda driven, task focused, and action oriented because they like to get things done. They hole up in their offices, rush to meetings, and ignore everyone they pass in the halls along the way. What a mistake! First and foremost, leadership is a people business. If you forget the people, you're undermining your leadership, and you run the risk of having it erode away. Then one day when you think you're leading, you'll turn around and discover that nobody is following and you're only taking a walk.

First and foremost, leadership is a people business.

Relationship building is always the foundation of effective leadership. Leaders who ignore the relational aspect of leadership tend to rely on their position instead. Or they expect competence to do "all the talking" for them. True, good leaders are competent, but they are also intentionally connected to the people they lead.

One of the best ways to stay connected to your people and keep track of how they're doing is to approach the task informally as you move among the people. As you see people

in the parking lot, chat with them. Go to meetings a few minutes early to see people, but don't start in on the agenda until you've had time to catch up. And, as the title of this chapter suggests, take time to walk slowly through the halls. Connect with people and give them an opportunity to make contact with you.

When it comes to connecting informally, leaders in the middle of an organization often have a distinct advantage over their leadership counterparts at the top. Leaders in the middle are viewed as more accessible than top leaders. They are perceived as having more time (even if it's not true). And they are seen as more approachable. Their people don't worry about "bothering them," and are less reluctant to take their time, unlike people who report directly to the top leader.

Walking slowly through the halls is a useful skill for leading down no matter where you are in an organization, but the best time to master it is while you're in the middle, not after you get to the top. To help you develop this skill successfully, here are a few suggestions.

1. Slow Down

To connect with people, you travel at their speed. When connecting with your leader, chances are you need to speed up. Though it is not always true, in general the higher you go in an organization's hierarchy, the faster the leaders travel. The leader at the top often has boundless energy and is very quick mentally.

To connect with people, you travel at their speed.

Conversely, when you move down, people move more slowly. Once again, not everyone will be slower, but in general it is true. People at the bottom don't process information as quickly, and they don't make decisions as fast. Part of that is due to having less information. Some of it comes from having less experience.

Most people who want to lead are naturally fast. But if you want to become a better leader, you actually need to slow down. You can move faster alone. You can garner more individual honors alone. But to lead others, you need to slow down enough to connect with them, engage them, and take them with you.

If you have children, you instinctively understand this. The next time you need to get something done around the house, try doing it two ways. First, have your kids help. That means you need to enlist them. You need to train them. You need to direct them. You need to supervise them. You need to redirect them. You need to recapture and reenlist them when they wander off. Depending on the ages of your children, it can be pretty exhausting, and even when the work is completed, it may not be to the standard you'd like.

Then try doing the task alone. How much faster can you go? How much better is the quality of the work? How much less aggravation is there to deal with? No wonder many parents start off enlisting their children in tasks to teach and develop them but then throw in the towel after a while and do the work themselves.

Working alone is faster (at least in the beginning), but it doesn't have the same return. If you want your children to learn, grow, and reach their potential, you need to pay the price and take the time and trouble to lead them through the process—even when it means slowing down or giving up some of your agenda. It's similar with employees. Leaders aren't necessarily the first to cross the finish line—people who run alone are the fastest. Leaders are the first to bring all of their people across the finish line. The payoff to leadership—at work or home—comes on the back end.

2. Express That You Care

When you go to your mailbox at home, I bet one of the first things you do is shuffle through the various items. What are you on the lookout for? You're probably looking for something with a handwritten envelope, because it's usually a sign that what's inside is something personal from someone you know. We all desire a personal touch from someone who cares about us.

I read somewhere that the United States Postal Service delivers 170 billion pieces of mail every year. Yet in this vast sea of mail, less than 4 percent of the total is comprised of personal letters. That means you have to sort through one hundred bills, magazines, bank statements, credit card offers, ads, and other pieces of junk mail to find just four items from someone who knows and actually cares about you.

The people who follow you also desire a personal touch. They want to know that others care about them. Most would be especially pleased to know that their boss had genuine

concern about them and valued them as human beings, not just as workers who can get things done for them or the organization.

3. Create a Healthy Balance of Personal and Professional Interest

Leaders who show interest in the individuals who work for them need to find the balance between personal and professional interest. Professional interest shows that you have the desire to help them. That is something all good leaders share. Personal interest goes deeper—it shows your heart.

When you take interest in your people as human beings, you need to be sure not to cross the line. There is a point at which interest becomes inappropriate. You mustn't be nosy. Your desire should be to help, not to invade someone's privacy or make them feel uncomfortable.

Start by asking fairly neutral questions. You can safely ask how someone's spouse or children are doing. You can ask about people's hobbies or other outside interests. Or you can ask a very general question such as, "How is everything else going?" Then pay attention to not only the content of their answer, but also for any kind of emotional reaction. If you sense that there might be something there, then ask a non-threatening follow-up question that asks if everything is okay—but don't push. If they choose to talk, don't judge, don't interrupt, and don't be too quick to offer advice unless they specifically ask for it.

Why should you take the time to do this? The reality is that when employees' personal lives are going well, their professional lives often follow suit. What happens at home colors every aspect of people's lives, including their work. If you have an idea where people are personally, you can know what to expect from them at work, and you may get the opportunity to help them along.

4. Pay Attention When People Start Avoiding You

If you make it a habit to walk slowly through the halls, you will get to know your people and the organization better. You will know when things are working. Your leadership intuition will increase, and when something is wrong, you will pick up on it much more quickly.

Most people are creatures of habit. They fall into patterns and do things the same way most of the time. As you walk around, you will get used to seeing people. Because you will be seen as approachable, people will come out of their offices or cubicles to chat with you. They'll be visible. If something is wrong with somebody who is normally communicative, that person will suddenly avoid you. So as you walk around, you have to ask yourself, *Who am I not seeing?*

Often it's not what people say; it's what they're not saying that is a tip-off that something isn't right. People are always quick to bring good news, but they avoid bringing bad news. I see examples of this all the time in my consulting company, ISS. When we are working with a leader to try to develop a

partnership, if that leader intends to sign with us, we hear about it right away. If that leader doesn't, she takes quite a while to make contact with us. A good 360-Degree Leader always slows down enough to be looking, listening, and reading between the lines.

5. Tend to the People, and They Will Tend to the Business

A 360-Degree Leader has many exceptional qualities. In fact, Value #5 of the next section of the book outlines those characteristics. But one thing they all have in common is that despite their passion for the vision and their love of action, they give the majority of their effort to the people. Leaders who tend only to business often end up losing the people *and* the business. But leaders who tend to the people usually build up the people—and the business.

As you strive to walk slowly through the halls, I want to encourage you to find your own unique way of doing it. Look for practices that fit your personality, working situation, and leadership style. One evening in the fall when I was watching *Monday Night Football*, I saw a wonderful example of a leader who was doing just that. The halftime feature was about NFL coach Dick Vermeil. He was being interviewed in a studio about his team, the Kansas City Chiefs, and how his season was going, but that's not what intrigued me.

Leaders who tend only to business often end up losing the people and *the business.*

Between interview questions, they were showing Vermeil and his team during a practice. As the players stretched during warm-ups, the veteran coach walked up and down the rows of players, chatting with them. He stopped next to one player, and I could hear him ask, "How's your wife doing?" And they dialogued for a while.

The interviewer asked Vermeil about his interaction, and he explained that the wife of that player had been fighting lupus. He went on to say that he cares about more than how his players catch the ball or tackle. He interacts with them as people first, then as football players. I've since talked to Dick Vermeil, and he told me that he often has players over to his house so that they can get to know each other better.

What's interesting to me is that when Vermeil came out of retirement to coach the St. Louis Rams in 1997, after a fourteen-year hiatus, I remember hearing reports that players were skeptical of Vermeil's methods and thought that he was old-fashioned and out of touch. And he kept telling them to just hang in there with him and see what happened. What happened was the team won the Super Bowl in 1999.

Will Vermeil win another Super Bowl? I don't know. But I do know this: he has found his own way of walking slowly through the halls that keeps him visible, available, and connected. And because of that, his players respect him and work hard for him because they know he cares about them. A leader can hardly ask for more than that.

Lead-Down Principle #2

SEE EVERYONE AS A "10"

I want to ask you a question: Who is your favorite teacher of all time? Think back through all your years in school, from kindergarten to the last year of your education. Who stands out? Is there a teacher who changed your life? Most of us have one. Mine was actually a Sunday school teacher named Glen Leatherwood. Who was yours?

What made that teacher different? Was it subject knowledge? Was it teaching technique? Though your teacher may have possessed great knowledge and mastered outstanding technique, I'm willing to bet that what separated that teacher from all of the others was his or her belief in you. That teacher probably saw you as a 10. The teacher who browbeats you and tells you how ignorant or undisciplined you are isn't the one who inspires you to learn and grow. It's the one who thinks you're wonderful and tells you so.

Now I'd like you to think about your working life and the leaders you've worked for over the years. As you think about them, ask yourself the following questions:

- Who gets my best effort? The leader who believes I'm a 10 or the leader who believes I'm a 2?
- Who do I enjoy working with? The leader who believes I'm a 10 or the leader who believes I'm a 2?

- Who is the easiest for me to approach? The leader who believes I'm a 10 or the leader who believes I'm a 2?
- Who wants the best for me? The leader who believes I'm a 10 or the leader who believes I'm a 2?
- Who will I learn the most from? The leader who believes I'm a 10 or the leader who believes I'm a 2?

360-Degree Leaders get more out of their people because they think more of their people. They respect and value them, and as a result, their people want to follow them. The positive, uplifting attitude that they bring to leadership creates a positive working environment where everyone on the team has a place and purpose—and where everyone shares in the win.

For some leaders, this is easy and natural, especially if they have positive personalities. I find that people who were greatly encouraged and valued as children often build up others almost instinctively. But it is a skill that can be learned by anyone, and it is a must for anyone who desires to become a 360-Degree Leader.

If you want to really shine in this area, apply the following suggestions when working with your people:

1. See Them as Who They Can Become

Author Bennett Cerf wrote that J. William Stanton, who served many years as a representative from Ohio in the United States Congress, treasured a letter he received from the Chamber of Commerce in Painesville, Ohio, dated 1949. The letter declined Stanton's offer to bring a new congressman as

the featured speaker for a fund-raising dinner. The missive reads: "We feel that this year we really need a big-name speaker who'll be a drawing card so we're hoping to bag the head football coach at John Carroll University. Thanks anyhow for suggesting Representative John F. Kennedy."[1] Do you have any idea who that coach might have been? I certainly don't.

Do you have a potential JFK in your midst? Or a Jack Welch? Or a Mother Teresa? It's easy to recognize great leadership and great talent once people have already blossomed, but how about before they come into their own?

Look for the great potential that is within each person you lead. When you find it, do your best to draw it out. Some leaders are so insecure that when they see a potential all-star, they try to push that person down because they worry that his or her high performance will make them look bad. But 360-Degree Leaders reach down to lift those people up. They recognize that people with huge potential are going to be successful anyway. The best role they can assume is that of discoverer and encourager. In that way, they add value to them and get to be a positive part of the process of their emergence as leaders.

2. Let Them "Borrow" Your Belief in Them

In 1989, Kevin Myers moved from Grand Rapids, Michigan, to Lawrenceville, Georgia, to plant a church. Kevin was a sharp young leader whose future looked bright, and his sponsoring organization, Kentwood Community Church, was glad to

support his efforts.

Kevin did all the right things as he prepared for the first service of Crossroads Community Church. He spent weeks talking to people in the community, he selected a good location, and he got his volunteers ready. When he opened the doors for the first time, his hopes were crushed as only about ninety people showed up—about a third of what he had expected. It was a major disappointment, because Kevin had been on staff at a large, dynamic growing church, and he had little desire to lead a small congregation. He was determined to persevere, however, figuring that in a year or two, he would get over the hump and build the kind of church that matched his vision.

After three years of struggle and little growth, Kevin was ready to throw in the towel. He made a trip to Michigan to meet with Wayne Schmidt, his former boss at Kentwood and the original sponsor of Kevin's church-planting endeavor. Feeling like a failure, Kevin explained to Wayne that he needed a job, because he was planning to close down the church in Georgia. Wayne's response changed Kevin's life. He said, "Kevin, if you've lost faith, borrow mine."

Uncertain about his future, but grateful to Wayne for his faith in him, Kevin returned to Georgia and didn't give up. Slowly, as Kevin grew in his leadership, so did his congregation. As I write this, Kevin leads 3,400 people every week, putting his congregation in the top 1 percent in the United States.

When the people you lead don't believe in themselves, you can help them believe in themselves, just as Wayne did for Kevin. Think of it as a loan, something you are giving freely,

but that will later return with dividends as that person succeeds.

3. Catch Them Doing Something Right

If you desire to see everyone as a 10 and help them believe in themselves, you need to encourage them by catching them doing something right. And that is really countercultural. We are trained our whole lives to catch people doing something wrong. If our parents and teachers caught us doing something, you can bet it was something wrong. So we tend to think in those same terms.

When you focus on the negative and catch people doing something wrong, it has no real power to make them any better. When we catch people doing something wrong, they become defensive. They make excuses. They evade. On the other hand, if we catch people doing something right, it gives them positive reinforcement. It helps them tap into their potential. It makes them want to do better.

Make it part of your daily agenda to look for things going right. They don't have to be big things, though of course you want to praise those things as well. It can be almost anything, as long as you are sincere in your praise.

4. Believe the Best—Give Others the Benefit of the Doubt

When we examine ourselves, we naturally give ourselves the benefit of the doubt. Why? Because we see ourselves in the

light of our intentions. On the other hand, when we look at others, we usually judge them according to their actions. Think about how much more positive our interaction with others would be if we believed the best in them and gave them the benefit of the doubt, just as we do for ourselves.

Many people are reluctant to adopt this attitude because they fear that others will consider them naive or will take advantage of them. The reality is that trustful people are not weaker than distrustful ones; they are actually stronger. As evidence, I offer the following trust fallacies and the facts that refute them, researched by sociology professor Morton Hunt.

Fallacy: Trustful people are more gullible.

Fact: Trustful people are no more likely to be fooled than mistrustful ones.

Fallacy: Trustful people are less perceptive than mistrustful people of what others are really feeling.

Fact: People who scored high on trust are actually better than others at reading people.

Fallacy: People with a poor opinion of themselves are more trustful than people with a good opinion of themselves.

Fact: The opposite is true. People with high self-esteem are more willing to take emotional risks.

Fallacy: Stupid people are trustful; smart people are mistrustful.

Fact: People with high aptitude or scholastic scores are no

more mistrustful or skeptical than people judged to be less intelligent.

Fallacy: Trustful people rely on others to direct their lives for them; mistrustful people rely on themselves.

Fact: The opposite is true. People who feel controlled by outside persons and forces are more mistrustful, while those who feel in charge of their lives are more trustful.

Fallacy: Trustful people are no more trustworthy than mistrustful people.

Fact: Mistrustful people are less trustworthy. Research validates what the ancient Greeks used to say: "He who mistrusts most should be trusted least."[2]

I'm not saying that you should become like an ostrich and stick your head in the sand. All I'm suggesting is that you give others the same consideration you give yourself. It's not a lot to ask, and the dividends it will pay you relationally can be huge.

5. Realize That "10" Has Many Definitions

What does it mean to be a 10? When you started reading this chapter and I suggested that you see everyone as a 10, did a certain image of a 10 come to mind? And did you immediately start comparing the people who work for you to that image and find them coming up short? I wouldn't be surprised if that were the case, because I think most of us have a pretty narrow view

of what constitutes a 10.

When it comes to improving in skills, I believe that most people cannot increase their ability beyond about two points on a scale of 1 to 10. So, for example, if you were born a 4 when it comes to math, no matter how hard you work at it, you will probably never become better than a 6. But here's the good news. Everybody is exceptional at something, and a 10 doesn't always look the same.

In their book *Now, Discover Your Strengths* (Free Press, 2001), Marcus Buckingham and Donald O. Clifton identify thirty-four areas of strength that they believe people exhibit—anything from responsibility to WOO (the ability to **w**in **o**ver **o**thers). And the authors assert that everyone has at least one skill they can perform better than the next ten thousand others. That means they believe everyone can be a 10 in some area. You can always focus on that area when encouraging one of your employees.

But let's say you employ someone who does not have any skill that is a 10 or could be developed into a 10. Does that mean you write him off as hopeless? No. You see, there are other non-skill areas where a person can grow into a 10 no matter what his or her starting point is—areas such as attitude, desire, discipline, and perseverance. If you don't see 10 potential anywhere else, look for it there.

6. Give Them the "10" Treatment

Most leaders treat people according to the number that they place on them. If employees are performing at an average level—let's say as a 5—then the boss gives them the 5 treatment.

But I believe people always deserve their leader's best, even when they are not giving their best. I say that because I believe every person has value as a human being and deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. That doesn't mean you reward bad performance. It just means that you treat people well and take the high road with them, even if they don't do the same for you.

People usually rise to the leader's expectations—if they like the leader.

It's been my observation that people usually rise to the leader's expectations—if they like the leader. If you have built solid relationships with your employees and they genuinely like and respect you, they will work hard and give their best.

I've learned a lot of things about leadership from many leaders over the years, but the one I still admire most is my father, Melvin Maxwell. In December 2004, I visited my parents in the Orlando area, and while I was there, I was scheduled to participate in a conference call. Because I needed a quiet place to do it, my dad graciously let me use his office.

As I sat at his desk, I noticed a card next to the phone with the following words written in my father's hand:

#1 Build people up by encouragement.
#2 Give people credit by acknowledgment.
#3 Give people recognition by gratitude.

I knew in a second why it was there. My father had written it to remind him of how he was to treat people as he spoke on the

phone with them. And I was instantly reminded that Dad, more than anyone else, taught me to see everyone as a 10.

Begin today to see and lead people as they can be, not as they are, and you will be amazed by how they respond to you. Not only will your relationship with them improve and their productivity increase, but you also will help them rise to their potential and become who they were created to be.

Lead-Down Principle #3

DEVELOP EACH TEAM MEMBER AS A PERSON

When Jack Welch was the CEO of General Electric, he famously sought to cut the bottom 10 percent of performers from his workforce every year. That practice has been criticized by many of his detractors, but isn't it clear why he would do such a thing? It wasn't to be cruel. It was to try to improve the organization.

Laying off poor performers is one way to try to help the organization. Recruiting top performers from other organizations is another. Leaders are beginning to see that those are not always the best methods for improvement. A few years ago I read an article in *USA Today* that indicated leaders were beginning to see the value of the solid team members they had who were neither stars nor duds. The article termed them "B players." It said:

> When employers aren't busy weeding out the bottom 10% of their workforce, they've been trying to steal the A players from the competition in a battle to lure the best. But some of those employers are coming around to the realization that failure and success might not lie among the weakest and strongest links, but in the solid middle, the B players . . . the 75% of workers who have been all but ignored.[1]

The article went on to say that people in the middle are the

backbone of every organization and that they should be valued, which I agree with. But I believe leaders need to take that concept one step further. How do you give your team an edge, helping the B players to perform at their highest level and helping the A players to elevate their game even further? You develop them!

There's a lot more to good leadership than just getting the job done. Getting the job done makes you a success. Getting the job done through others makes you a leader. But developing the people while helping them get the job done at the highest level makes you an exceptional leader. When you develop others, they become better, they do the job better, and both you and the organization benefit. Everybody wins. The result? You become the kind of leader that others seek out and want to follow because of the way you add value to people.

How to Develop Your People

Before I make a few recommendations about how to develop others, I need to make clear the difference between equipping people and developing them. When you equip people, you teach them how to do a job. If you show someone how to use a machine or some other device, that's equipping. If you teach someone how to make a sale, that's equipping. If you train them in departmental procedures, that's equipping. You should already be providing training to your people so that they know how to do their jobs. Equipping should be a given (although I know that not all leaders do this well).

Development is different. When you develop people, you

are helping them to improve as individuals. You are helping them acquire personal qualities that will benefit them in many areas of life, not just their jobs. When you help someone to cultivate discipline or a positive attitude, that's development. When you teach someone to manage their time more effectively or improve their people skills, that's development. When you teach leadership, that's development. What I've found is that many leaders don't have a developmental mind-set. They expect their employees to take care of their developmental needs on their own. What they fail to realize, however, is that development always pays higher dividends than equipping because it helps the whole person and lifts him to a higher level.

When you equip people, you teach them how to do a job. When you develop them, you are helping them to improve as individuals.

Development is harder to do than equipping, but it is well worth the price. Here's what you need to do as you get started:

1. See Development as a Long-Term Process

Equipping is usually a fairly quick and straightforward process. Most people can learn the mechanics of their job very rapidly—in a matter of hours, days, or months, depending on the type of work. But development always takes time. Why? Because it requires change on the part of the person being developed, and you just can't rush that. Like the old saying goes, it takes nine months to produce a baby—no matter how

many people you put on the job.

As you approach the development of your people, think of it as an ongoing process, not something you can do once and then be done. When I led Skyline Church in the San Diego area, I made the development of my staff one of my highest priorities. Some of it I did one-on-one. But I also scheduled a time of teaching for the entire staff every month on topics that would grow them as leaders. It's something I did consistently for a decade.

You cannot give what you do not have. In order to develop your staff, you need to keep growing yourself.

I recommend that you plan to develop the people who work for you. Make it a consistent, regularly scheduled activity. You can ask your staff to read a book every month or two and discuss it together. You can teach a lesson. You can take them to conferences or seminars. Approach the task with your own unique spin. But know this: you cannot give what you do not have. In order to develop your staff, you must keep growing yourself.

2. Discover Each Person's Dreams and Desires

When you equip people, you base what you do on your needs or those of the organization. You teach people what you want them to know so that they can do a job for you. On the other hand, development is based on their needs. You give them what they need in order to become better people. To do

that well, you need to know people's dreams and desires.

Walter Lippmann, founder of *The New Republic*, said, "Ignore what a man desires and you ignore the very source of his power." Dreams are the generators of energy with your people. If they have high passion for their dreams, they have high energy. If you know what those dreams are and you develop them in a way that brings those dreams within reach, you not only harness that energy, but you also fuel it.

"Ignore what a man desires and you ignore the very source of his power."
—WALTER LIPPMANN

Unfortunately, some leaders don't like to see others pursuing their dreams because it reminds them of how far they are from living their dreams. As a result, these types of leaders try to talk people out of reaching for their dreams, and they often do it using the same excuses and rationalizations they give themselves.

If you have found yourself resenting the dreams of others and trying to talk them out of pursuing them, then you need to rekindle the fire you have for your own dreams and start pursuing them again. When a leader is learning, growing, and pursuing his own dreams, he is more likely to help others pursue their own.

3. LEAD EVERYONE DIFFERENTLY

One of the mistakes rookie leaders often make is that they try to lead everyone the same way. But let's face it. Everyone

doesn't respond to the same kind of leadership. You should try to be consistent with everyone. You should treat everyone with kindness and respect. But don't expect to use the same strategies and methods with everyone.

You have to figure out what leadership buttons to push with each individual person on your team. One person will respond well to being challenged; another will want to be nurtured. One will need the game plan drawn up for him; another will be more passionate if she can create the game plan herself. One will require consistent, frequent follow-up; another will want breathing room. If you desire to be a 360-Degree Leader, you need to take responsibility for conforming your leadership style to what your people need, not expecting them to adapt to you.

If you desire to be a 360-Degree Leader, you need to take responsibility for conforming your leadership style to what your people need, not expecting them to adapt to you.

4. Use Organizational Goals for Individual Development

If you have to build a mechanism that is entirely separate from the actual work that needs to get done in order to develop your people, it's probably going to wear you out and frustrate you. The way to avoid that is to use organizational goals as much as possible for people's individual development. It's really the best way to go.

- When it's bad for the individual and bad for the organization—everyone loses.
- When it's good for the individual but bad for the organization—the organization loses.
- When it's bad for the individual but good for the organization—the individual loses.
- When it's good for the individual and good for the organization—everyone wins.

I know this may seem a little simplistic, but I want you to notice one thing. The only scenario where there are no losses is when something is good for the organization *and* the individual. That's a recipe for long-term success.

The way to create this kind of win is to match up three things:

- A Goal: Find a need or function within the organization that would bring value to the organization.
- A Strength: Find an individual on your team with a strength that needs developing that will help to achieve that organizational goal.
- An Opportunity: Provide the time, money, and resources the individual needs to achieve the goal.

The more often you can create alignments like this, the more often you will create wins for everyone—the organization, the individual to be developed, and you.

5. HELP THEM KNOW THEMSELVES

I always operate on the basic principle that people don't know themselves. A person can't be realistic about his potential until he is realistic about his position. In other words, you have to know where you are before you can figure out how to get someplace else.

A person can't be realistic about his potential until he is realistic about his position.

Max DePree, chairman emeritus of Herman Miller, Inc. and a member of *Fortune* magazine's National Business Hall of Fame, said that it is the first responsibility of a leader to define reality. I believe it is the first responsibility of a leader who develops others to help them define the reality of who they are. Leaders help them recognize their strengths and weaknesses. That is critical if we want to help others.

6. BE READY TO HAVE A HARD CONVERSATION

There is no development without hard lessons. Almost all growth comes when we have positive responses to negative things. The more difficult the thing is to deal with, the more we need to push in order to grow. The process is often not very pleasant, but you always have to pay a price for growth.

Good leaders are willing to have hard conversations to start the growth process for the people under their care. A friend told me the story of a former U.S. Army officer who was working in a Fortune 500 company. The man was repeatedly passed over when the organization's leaders were seeking and

recruiting employees with leadership potential to advance in the organization, and he couldn't understand why. His performance record was good, his attitude was positive, and he possessed experience. So what was the problem?

The former officer possessed some peculiar personal habits that made others uncomfortable around him. When he became stressed, he hummed. When he became especially agitated, he sat on his hands. He wasn't aware that he did these things, and nobody ever pointed out the distracting and unprofessional nature of these peculiar habits. People simply wrote him off as being odd.

Fortunately, the man finally worked for a leader who was willing to have a hard conversation with him. The leader made him aware of the problem, he broke the habit, and today he is a senior leader in that organization.

When you don't want to have a difficult conversation, you need to ask yourself: *Is it because it will hurt them or hurt me?* If it is because it will hurt you, then you're being selfish. Good leaders get past the discomfort of having difficult conversations for the sake of the people they lead and the organization. The thing you need to remember is that people will work through difficult things if they believe you want to work with them.

7. CELEBRATE THE RIGHT WINS

Leaders who develop others always want to help their people get wins under their belts, especially when they are just starting out. But a strategic win always has greatest value. Try to target wins based on where you want people to grow and

how you want them to grow. That will give them extra incentive and encouragement to go after the things that will help them improve.

It really does matter how you set up these wins. A good win is one that is not only achieved but also approached in the right way. If someone you're leading goes about an activity all wrong but somehow gets the right results—and you celebrate it—you're setting up that person to fail. Experience alone isn't a good enough teacher—evaluated experience is. As the leader, you need to evaluate what looks like a win to make sure it is actually teaching what your employee needs to learn in order to grow and develop.

Experience alone isn't a good enough teacher—evaluated experience is.

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8. Prepare Them for Leadership

In an organizational context, no development process would be complete without the inclusion of leadership development. The better your people are at leading, the greater potential impact they will have on and for the organization. But that means more than just teaching leadership lessons or asking people to read leadership books. It means taking them through a process that gets them ready to step in and lead.

The best process I know is like on-the-job training where people work side by side. Imagine that I wanted to prepare you for leadership. This is how we would proceed:

I DO IT. The process begins with my knowing how to do

something myself. I cannot give what I do not possess myself.

I DO IT AND YOU WATCH. After I have mastered the process, I take you with me and ask you to watch. I explain what I'm doing. I encourage you to ask questions. I want you to see and understand everything I'm doing.

YOU DO IT AND I WATCH. You can only learn so much from watching. At some point you have to jump in and actually try it. When you reach this stage and start doing it yourself, my role is to encourage you, gently correct you, and redirect you as needed.

YOU DO IT. As soon as you have the fundamentals down, I step back and give you some room so that you can master it and start to develop your own style and methods.

YOU DO IT AND SOMEONE ELSE WATCHES. The last thing I need to do in the development process is help you find someone to develop and encourage you to get started. You never really know something until you teach it to someone else. Besides, the process isn't really complete until you pass on what you've received to someone else.

If you dedicate yourself to the development of people and commit to it as a long-term process, you will notice a change in your relationships with the people who work with you. They will develop a strong loyalty to you because they know that you have their best interests at heart and you have proven it with your actions. And the longer you develop them, the longer they are likely to stay with you.

You never really know something until you teach it to someone else.

Knowing this, don't hold on to your people too tightly. Sometimes the best thing you can do for people is to let them spread their wings and fly. But if you have been diligent in the development process—and helped them to pass on what they've learned—someone else will step up and take their place. When you continually develop people, there is never a shortage of leaders to build the organization and help you carry the load.

Lead-Down Principle #4

PLACE PEOPLE IN THEIR STRENGTH ZONES

Most leaders agree that having the right people on the team and putting those people in the right places are important. But how much of a difference does it make, really? Are we talking about a small difference or a big one? That's what the people at the Gallup Organization asked themselves while doing research for *Now, Discover Your Strengths*. Here is what the book's authors learned:

> In our latest meta-analysis The Gallup Organization asked this question of 198,000 employees working in 7,939 business units within 36 companies: At work do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day? We then compared the responses to the performance of the business units and discovered the following: When employees answered "strongly agree" to this question, they were 50 percent more likely to work in business units with lower employee turnover, 38 percent more likely to work in more productive business units, and 44 percent more likely to work in business units with higher customer satisfaction scores.[1]

That is a highly significant difference. What percentage of workers do you think are working in their areas of strength? According to the authors, the answer is only 20 percent.[2]

The number one reason people don't like their jobs is that they are not working in the area of their strengths. When employees are continually asked to perform in an area of

weakness, they become demoralized, they are less productive, and they eventually burn out. Whose fault is that? Usually, it is their leaders' fault!

The number one reason people don't like their jobs is that they are not working in the area of their strengths.

Successful people find their own strength zones. Successful leaders find the strength zones of the people they lead. Individuals may seek a job with a particular organization, but they generally don't place themselves in their positions at work. For the most part, their leaders are the ones who do that.

When you place individuals in their strength zones, a couple of things happen. First, you change people's lives for the better. In an earlier chapter, I mentioned that people's personal lives color every aspect of their existence, including work. The reverse is also true. People's work lives color the other aspects of their lives. When you put people in their strength zones, their jobs become rewarding and fulfilling. It often makes the difference between someone who hates going to work and someone who loves it. The other benefit is that you help the organization and you.

STEPS FOR PLACING PEOPLE IN THEIR STRENGTH ZONES

The ability to help people find their best place in their careers is an awesome power and a great responsibility, one that we should not take lightly as leaders. As you think about

the people who work for you, try to do the following for each individual:

1. Discover Their True Strengths

Most people do not discover their strengths on their own. They often get drawn into the routine of day-to-day living and simply get busy. They rarely explore their strengths or reflect on their successes or failures. That's why it is so valuable for them to have a leader who is genuinely interested in them help them to recognize their strengths.

There are many helpful tools available that you can use to aid people in the process of self-discovery. I've already mentioned the work of Buckingham and Clifton. Their book, *Now, Discover Your Strengths*, and the Strengths Finder material on their Web site can be helpful. So can personality tests such as DISC or Myers-Briggs. And there are many vocational tests as well. Whatever works in the context of your organization can be helpful. But don't limit yourself to tests. Often the most valuable help you can give will be based on your personal observations.

Successful people find their own strength zones. Successful leaders find the strength zones of the people they lead.

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2. Give Them the Right Job

Moving someone from a job they hate to the right job can be life changing. One executive I interviewed said he moved a

person on his staff to four different places in the organization, trying to find the right fit. Because he'd placed her wrong so many times, he was almost ready to give up on her. But he knew she had great potential, and she was right for the organization. Finally, after he found the right job for her, she was a star!

Because this executive knows how important it is to have every person working in the right job, he asks his staff once a year, "If you could be doing anything, what would it be?" From their answers, he gets clues about any people who may have been miscast in their roles.

Trying to get the right person in the right job can take a lot of time and energy. Let's face it. Isn't it easier for a leader to just put people where it is most convenient and get on with the work? Once again, this is an area where leaders' desire for action works against them. Fight against your natural tendency to make a decision and move on. Don't be afraid to move people around if they're not shining the way you think they could.

3. Identify the Skills They'll Need and Provide World-Class Training

Every job requires a particular set of skills that employees must possess in order to be really successful. Even someone with great personal strengths and a great "fit" will not truly be working in his strength zone if he doesn't have these skills. As the leader, it is your job to make sure your people acquire what they need to win.

Two of the most important questions to ask are:

What am I doing to develop myself?
What am I doing to develop my staff?

The first question determines your personal potential and ongoing capacity to lead. The second determines the potential of your team. If they aren't growing, then they will not be any better tomorrow than they are today.

In *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork*, the Law of the Niche says, "All players have a place where they add the most value." Whatever that niche is determines the best role that person should assume on your team. And it really does make a difference. When leaders really get this, the teams they lead perform at an incredible level. And it reflects positively on those leaders. I don't think it is an exaggeration to say that the success of a leader is determined more by putting people into their strength zones than by anything else.

The Law of the Niche: "All players have a place where they add the most value."

When I was in high school, I was fortunate to have a coach who understood this. During one of our varsity basketball practices, our coach, Don Neff, decided he wanted to teach us a very important lesson about basketball. He got the first-and second-string teams out on the floor to scrimmage. That wasn't unusual—we scrimmaged all the time. Our second team had some good players, but clearly the first team was much better.

This time he had us do something very different from the norm. He let the second-string players take their normal positions, but he assigned each of us starters to a different role from our usual one. I was normally a shooting guard, but for this scrimmage I was asked to play center. And as I recall, our center was put in the point-guard position.

"Having the best players on the floor isn't enough. You have to have the best players in the right positions."
—DON NEFF

We were instructed to play to twenty, but the game didn't take long. The second team trounced us in no time. When the scrimmage was over, Coach Neff called us over to the bench and said, "Having the best players on the floor isn't enough. You have to have the best players in the right positions."

I never forgot that lesson. And as I've led people over the last thirty years, I've applied it to much more than basketball. It doesn't matter what kind of a team you're leading. If you don't place people in their strength zones, you're making it almost impossible for them—and you—to win.

Lead-Down Principle #5

MODEL THE BEHAVIOR YOU DESIRE

One of my favorite leadership books is *Learning to Lead* (Word, 1986), by Fred Smith. I remember very vividly where I was when I first read it. I was on a plane flying back to San Diego. It stands out in my memory because when I read his ideas on "incarnational leadership," I pulled out a legal pad to begin brainstorming. In the book Fred said that when a leader's identity and actions are consistent, the results he gets are consistent. When they are inconsistent, then so are the results.

On my legal pad, I created three columns. At the top of the first, I wrote, "What I Am." There I intended to write down the qualities I desired to embrace as a leader. At the top of the second column, I wrote, "What I Do," the actions that would be consistent with each character trait. The third column contained the results of consistent character and behavior.

WHAT I AM	WHAT I DO	RESULTS
Character driven	Do right	Credibility
Relational	Care	Community
Encourager	Believe in people	High morale
Visionary	Set goals	Direction
Student	Learn	Growth
Inspiring	Motivate	Action

Selfless	Focus on others	Reaching out
Confident	Make decisions	Security

A list like this can be a real eye-opener, because when we don't get the results we want, we are often tempted to try to place the blame outside of ourselves.

THE LEADER'S IMPACT

Just as consistency can create power in your personal life, it can also create power in your leadership. Leaders set the tone and the pace for all the people working for them. Therefore, they need to be what they want to see. Let me explain how this works.

Leaders need to be what they want to see.

YOUR BEHAVIOR DETERMINES THE CULTURE

One of the easiest places to see distinct cultures is in sports. For example, think about the NFL's Oakland Raiders. For years they have prided themselves on their bad-boy image. Their owner, Al Davis, is a renegade. Their players are tough guys. Even their fans follow suit. During a game, just look at the area in their stadium that they call "the black hole." Your culture determines whom you attract. The behavior of that team for decades has created its culture.

Think about another team in the NFL, the Dallas Cowboys. For a long time, the team was a perennial winner, and for years

the Cowboys were called "America's Team." Tom Landry, the team's coach at that time, helped to create that culture. After Landry left the team, the behavior of the coaches and players began to change—and so did the culture. Nobody—except maybe an occasional Texan—calls the Cowboys "America's Team" anymore.

If you desire to instill a particular value into your organization's culture, then you need to ask yourself whether it is an identifiable behavior among the people of your organization—starting with yourself. And the only way to change the culture is to change your behavior.

YOUR ATTITUDE DETERMINES THE ATMOSPHERE

Have you ever worked for someone who had a glass-is-half-empty kind of attitude? No matter what the circumstances, the outlook was gloomy. It is night and day different from working for someone whose attitude is upbeat and optimistic. The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything.

The leader's attitude is like a thermostat for the place she works. If her attitude is good, the atmosphere is pleasant, and the environment is easy to work in. But if her attitude is bad, the temperature is insufferable. Nobody wants to work in an environment that is overheated or icy cold.

YOUR VALUES DETERMINE THE DECISIONS

Roy Disney, brother and partner of Walt Disney, said, "It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values

are." Not only is that true, but I'd add that it's also not hard to stay with the decisions you make when they are based on your values. Decisions that are not consistent with our values are always short-lived.

Decisions that are not consistent with our values are always short-lived.

Whatever you embrace will come out in the decisions of your people. If you value shortcuts, then your employees will make decisions that value speed over quality. If you are insensitive to others' feelings, then your staff will make decisions that don't take people's feelings into account. If you exhibit even the slightest tolerance for dishonesty, then you can bet that someone on the team will think it is okay to make decisions that violate the standards of integrity.

YOUR INVESTMENT DETERMINES THE RETURN

Just like in the world of finance, the only way you get a return with people is to make an investment in them. The seeds you sow determine the harvest you reap. Our problem is that we often focus on the reaping rather than the sowing.

What's worse than training your people and losing them? Not training them and keeping them.

I've already written about the importance of developing and equipping employees, so I don't need to say a lot more here. I'll give you just one thought: What's worse than training your

people and losing them? Not training them and keeping them.

Your Character Determines the Trust

Do people trust you? Are the people who work for you quick to believe that you have their best interests at heart? Or do they question your intentions and weigh your motives when you introduce them to a new idea? The answers to those questions can be traced back to your character.

Trust is not given nor can it be assumed simply because you have a leadership position with others. Trust has to be earned, and it usually comes when you are tested. Whether you pass or fail the test is almost always determined by your character. And here's the really tough thing. When you went to school, 60 percent was probably a passing grade; or if your school had particularly high standards, maybe 70 percent. When it comes to trust, the only passing grade is 100 percent. If people can't trust you all of the time, then they will consider you untrustworthy.

Your Work Ethic Determines the Productivity

I love the story of the crusty old Scotsman who worked hard and expected the people he led to do the same. His workers would tease, "Hey Scotty, don't you know that Rome wasn't built in a day?"

"Aye, I know that," he would answer. "But I wasn't the foreman on that job."

Leaders truly do set the tone on the job when it comes to productivity. Employees soon feel very uncomfortable if they are lax in their work ethic but they can see their boss working diligently. Employees who possess strong character quickly feel prompted to pick up the pace.

Thomas Jefferson said, "It's wonderful how much can be done if we are always working." If you want your people to always be working, you had better be too.

YOUR GROWTH DETERMINES THE POTENTIAL

The most important leadership lesson I teach is the Law of the Lid: "Leadership ability determines a person's level of effectiveness." If your leadership is a 5 (on a scale from 1 to 10), then your effectiveness will be no greater than a 5. Leadership is the glass ceiling of personal achievement.

The same is true of the people you lead. Your leadership, if it is not continually growing, can be a lid to the potential of your people. Why? Because you teach what you know, but you reproduce what you are. You can't give people what you do not have. If you want to increase the potential of your team, you need to keep growing yourself.

One of my favorite examples of leadership modeling can be found in the story of David, king of ancient Israel. Most people are familiar with the story of David and Goliath. During a war between the Hebrew and Philistine peoples, Goliath, a warrior-giant, challenged any individual who would fight him to a winner-take-all battle. Saul, Israel's king, cowered in his tent—and so did his army. But David, a shepherd boy whose older brothers stood among the cowards, challenged Goliath and

defeated him in combat. The incident is often recounted as a children's story.

Most people familiar with the Bible know that David became king. What many don't know is that in the years before he ascended the throne, David drew warriors to him and created a strong private army. And those warriors became like David, to the point where several of them also became giant killers.

Though the results are not always that dramatic, it is always true that followers become like their leaders. They are influenced by their leaders' values. They adopt their working methods. They even emulate many of their quirks and habits. That's why we must always be aware of our own conduct before criticizing the people who work for us. If you don't like what your people are doing, first take a look at yourself.

Lead-Down Principle #6

TRANSFER THE VISION

Let's say that you're doing a good job as a 360-Degree Leader, and you're leading down effectively. You're modeling the way. You're developing relationships with your people and building them up. You've trained them. You're developing them and plan to continue doing so. Now what? It's like you've taken the time to build a fine weapon and load it. So what do you do? You aim at the bull's-eye and pull the trigger! In the area of leadership, that means transferring the vision.

If you were the leader at the top of the organization, you would be transferring your own vision. As a leader in the middle of the organization, you will be transferring what is primarily the vision of others (as we discussed in Section II, Lead-Up Principle #6: "The Vision Challenge"). Leaders in the middle are the crucial link in that process. The vision may be cast by the top leaders, but it rarely gets transferred to the people without the wholehearted participation of the leaders lower in the organization who are closer to them. Though leaders in the middle may not always be the inventors of the vision, they are almost always its interpreters.

Though leaders in the middle may not always be the inventors of the vision, they are almost always its interpreters.

So how do 360-Degree Leaders interpret the vision in a way that fires up the people and sets them off in the right direction? If you include the following seven elements, you will be well on your way to hitting the target.

1. CLARITY

When I lived in San Diego, I used to go to a lot of Padres baseball games. I had great seats right behind the dugout. Back then, the team wasn't very good, and the organization would do a number of promotions, games, and activities to try to keep the crowd engaged. One of the regular things they would do between two of the innings was a fan game where they would put a player's picture on the big-screen in the stadium. But they didn't put the picture up all at once. They had divided it into about a dozen sections, and they would put up one piece at a time until finally the whole picture was complete.

When preparing to cast vision, ask: What do I want them to know, and what do I want them to do?

I know that's not very exciting. What was really interesting to me was the crowd's reaction. You could tell by the sound of their reactions when people would get it. Early on, there was anticipation, but you could tell that nobody knew whose picture it was because it was just too disjointed and incomplete. Then you'd start to hear a murmur—that was the sound of the really quick people getting it. Then it would get a little louder as more got it, and suddenly, it got very noisy. That was when most of the people in the stadium had the

picture.

The casting of vision is very similar. If the vision isn't clear, the people aren't clear. They just can't figure it out. You have to put all the pieces together for them to help them "get" it. When preparing to cast vision, ask yourself: *What do I want them to know, and what do I want them to do?* And once you know the answer, keep communicating and filling in the blanks until you can sense that most of your people get it—not just the quick ones.

2. Connection of Past, Present, and Future

I've noticed that most people who cast vision focus almost entirely on the future. On one level that makes sense. After all, vision is by its very nature focused on the future. But any leader who casts vision and neglects to tie in the past and present is really missing an opportunity.

Talking only about the past gives no hope for the future, so you certainly don't want to put your focus there. But if you ignore the past, you fail to connect people to the organization's history. If you show that you value what has gone before and honor the people who laid the foundation to get you where you are today, you validate those people who have worked hard and sacrificed to build what already exists. You also give the people who are new to the process the added security of knowing they are part of something bigger.

When people are able to touch the past, they will be more inclined to reach for the future. Anytime you can show that the past, present, and future are unified, you bring power and continuity to your vision casting.

3. PURPOSE

Although vision tells people where they need to go, purpose tells them why they should go. Not only does that help people to make sense of what they are being asked to do, but it also helps them to stay on target. It helps them to make adjustments, improvise, and innovate as they encounter obstacles or experience other difficulties.

Although vision tells people where they need to go, purpose tells them why they should go.

4. GOALS

In *Leadership*, historian and political scientist James MacGregor Burns writes, "Leadership is leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that present the values and the motivations—the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations—of both leaders and followers" (Harper Perennial, 1978). Without goals and a strategy to achieve them, vision isn't measurable or attainable.

I've met many leaders over the years who had a pie-in-the-sky idea, but little more than hope when it came to figuring out how to get there. Hope is not a strategy. When you give people a process, they realize that the vision is realistic. And that increases their confidence in you and the vision.

5. A CHALLENGE

Just because you make the vision realistic doesn't mean you

can't make it challenging. In fact, if vision doesn't require people to stretch, they may wonder if it is worthy of their dedication.

Some leaders seem to be afraid to challenge their teams, but a challenge makes good people want to spread their wings and fly. It fires up the committed people—and fries the uncommitted ones. You will accurately define your people if you ask them to stretch.

6. STORIES

If you want to put a human face on a challenging vision, then include stories. They make the vision relational and warm. Think about people who have been involved in the advancement of the organization so far. Tell about their struggles and victories. Praise their contributions. Make it personal. When you do that, you make the vision and the process identifiable to the average people who are wondering, *Should I be a part of this? Can I be a part of this? Can I make a difference?* A story helps them to see that even though they may have to reach to help achieve the vision, it is within their grasp.

7. PASSION

The final piece of the vision puzzle is passion. If there is no passion in the picture, then your vision isn't transferable; it is just a pleasant snapshot. Who's going to work hard, put in long hours, fight through obstacles, and go the extra mile for that? The wonderful thing about passion is that it is

contagious. If you are fired up, then they will get fired up, and they will need that fire to keep them going.

There is definitely a link between ownership and success. You don't get the latter without the former, and 360-Degree Leaders cultivate the ownership. They take the vision "from me to we." The best person I've ever had on my staff when it came to the transfer of the vision was Dan Reiland. When I was at Skyline Church, Dan was my executive pastor. He did a great job of transferring the vision with the staff, but what impressed me most was the way he did it with the laypeople in the congregation.

If there is no passion in the picture, then your vision isn't transferable.

For more than a decade, Dan led a class here of young professional couples called Joint Venture. The people he attracted were really the up-and-coming leaders of the organization. During the last five years I was at Skyline, I think every new board member emerged from the ranks of Dan's leadership.

Every year at Christmas, Dan invited me to speak at Joint Venture's big Christmas party. It was always a first-class affair. It was usually hosted at a nice hotel or conference center, the food was great, and everybody was dressed to the nines—the ladies were in evening wear, many of the men in tuxes. It became a tradition that they were the first group of people in the congregation to whom I would cast vision for the coming year.

There were two reasons I did that. First, there were many

influencers in that group. The second reason was that they always got it. They were right there tracking with me. Why? Because they were like their leader, Dan, who was continually transferring my vision to them the other fifty-one weeks of the year. I feel certain that the church would not have moved as quickly as it did if Dan hadn't been such a good leader in the middle of the organization.

People say that the bigger a ship is, the harder it is to turn. That may be true of ships, but it's really different in organizations. An organization is one big entity that has many small ones in it. If every leader in the middle of the organization is a 360-Degree Leader who excels at transferring the vision to the crew in their area, then even a huge organization would be able to turn very quickly. It is not the size of the organization that matters; it is the size of leaders within it.

Lead-Down Principle #7

REWARD FOR RESULTS

A man was enjoying an afternoon in a small fishing boat on a peaceful lake. He fished as he munched on a chocolate bar. The weather was perfect, his cell phone was turned off, and all he could think about was how happy he was.

Just then he spotted a snake in the water with a frog in its mouth. He felt sorry for the frog, so he scooped up the snake with his landing net, took the frog out of its mouth, and tossed it to safety. Then he felt sorry for the snake. He broke off a piece of his chocolate bar, gave it to the snake, and placed it back in the water, where it swam away.

There, he thought. *The frog is happy, the snake is happy, and now I'm happy again. This is great.* He cast his line back into the water and then settled back again.

A few minutes later, he heard a bump on the side of the boat. He looked over the side, and there was the snake again. This time it had two frogs in his mouth!

The moral of the story is this: Be careful what you reward, because whatever gets rewarded gets done.

I'm guessing that as a leader you are probably strongly aware of this truth. And it doesn't matter if the thing that gets rewarded is positive or negative. Whatever actions leaders reward will be repeated. That's why it's very important to

reward results—and to do it the right way. When you use every tool at your disposal to reward your people, you not only inspire them to do the things that are right for the organization but also to work harder and to feel better about the job they're doing. Rewarding for results makes you a more effective—and more influential—360-Degree Leader.

Whatever actions leaders reward will be repeated.

To reward results most effectively, follow these seven principles:

1. Give Praise Publicly and Privately

The place to start when it comes to rewarding others is with your praise. You cannot praise too much. Billy Hornsby, EQUIP's European coordinator, advised, "It's okay to let those you lead outshine you, for if they shine brightly enough, they reflect positively on you."

In *25 Ways to Win with People*, Les Parrott and I explain the importance of praising people in front of other people. The more important the "audience" hearing the praise to the people receiving it, the more valuable it is. But I want to suggest that before you praise people publicly, first praise them privately. Doing that gives what you say integrity; people know you're not just trying to manipulate them by saying something kind. Besides, most of the time when people are praised privately, inside they wish others were there to hear it. If you praise privately first and then do it publicly, it is doubly important because it fulfills the longing they had for others to hear it.

"It's okay to let those you lead outshine you, for if they shine brightly enough, they reflect positively on you."
—BILLY HORNSBY

2. GIVE MORE THAN JUST PRAISE

Now that I've encouraged you to praise people, I need to tell you that you have to give them more than just praise.

If you praise them but don't raise them, it won't pay their bills.

If you raise them but don't praise them, it won't cure their ills.

Talk is cheap—unless you back it up with money. Good leaders take good care of their people. If you really think about it, the people who cost the organization the most aren't the ones who get paid the most. The ones that cost the most are the people whose work doesn't rise to the level of their pay.

When the pay that people receive doesn't match the results they achieve, then they become highly discouraged. If that happens under your watch as a leader, it will not only take a toll on your people's effort, but it will also take a toll on your leadership. One leader I interviewed said he once relocated to the northwestern United States to take a job running a dwindling department in an organization. In nine months' time, he doubled the impact of his department.

When he went for his annual review, his performance was totally ignored. He was told the staff was getting a blanket 5-

percent increase in salary. That was hard to swallow, because he was to be rewarded the same as the other departmental leaders, even the ones who hadn't made any kind of significant improvement in their areas. But he became even more demoralized that his increase would be prorated down to 3.75 percent because he hadn't been there the whole year. Talk about taking the wind out of a person's sails!

3. DON'T REWARD EVERYONE THE SAME

That brings me to my next point. If you want to be an effective leader, you cannot reward everyone the same way. This is a major pressure for most leaders. All but the top people in an organization want everyone to be treated the same way. They say that they want everything to be "fair." But is it fair for someone who produces twice the revenue of her counterpart to be paid the same? Should the person who carries the team be paid the same as the one he has to continually carry? I don't think so. Mick Delaney said, "Any business or industry that pays equal rewards to its goof-offs and its eager beavers sooner or later will find itself with more goof-offs than eager beavers."

So how do you go about addressing the pressure to be fair while still rewarding results? Praise effort, but reward only results. Since whatever gets rewarded gets done, if you continually praise effort and do it for everyone, people will continue to work hard. If they are working in their strength zones and keep working hard, they will eventually achieve good results. At that time, reward them financially.

"Any business or industry that pays equal rewards to its goof-offs and its eager beavers sooner or later will find itself with more goof-offs than eager beavers."
—MICK DELANEY

4. GIVE PERKS BEYOND PAY

Let's face it. Leaders in the middle of an organization often have limitations on how they can reward people financially. So what is a 360-Degree Leader to do? Reward people with perks. What would it be like if you had a special reserved parking place but gave it to one of your employees for a week or a month? What kind of an impression would that make on the person who received it? Anything you get as a perk you can share with the people who work with you, whether it's a parking place, free tickets to an event, or use of the corporate suite.

Another area where you can share your wealth is in your relationships. It requires a secure leader to do so, but if you introduce your employees to friends, acquaintances, and professionals who might interest or benefit them, they will feel rewarded and grateful.

Finally, though this may seem a little odd, I want to recommend that you try to extend perks or acknowledgment to your employees' family members, when appropriate. They are often the ones who make great sacrifices for the work to get done, especially during a crisis. One leader I interviewed told me a story that affirmed the positive impact of such an acknowledgment. He said his organization's lighting system

had crashed two weeks prior to a planned production. For the performance to go on, the entire system had to be replaced in a week's time, and he was set to oversee the job. To make matters worse, the whole thing happened in December, as Christmas approached.

This leader started preparations a week before the installation, and once the electrician arrived to start the job, he didn't leave his side. He knew that if he went home while the crew was working, progress would stall. He worked more than one hundred hours that week, ate every meal at work, and never saw his kids the entire week.

He completed the work on Sunday, and then reported to work the next morning. His boss had a surprise for him. Knowing that the leader had missed spending time with his five-year-old son, his boss arranged for his son to attend an important staff meeting that was planned for that morning. As the adults met, the boy sat on his father's lap and colored. The leader later told me, "Bonuses are wonderful. Gifts are great. But that moment, appreciating my sacrifice to my family, meant more than anything!"

5. PROMOTE WHEN POSSIBLE

If you have the choice to promote someone from within or bring in someone from outside—all other factors being equal—promote from within. Few things reward an employee the way a promotion does. A promotion says, "You've done a good job, we believe you can do even more, and here is a reward for your performance." And the best promotions are the ones that don't need to be explained because everyone who works with the

ones being promoted have seen them grow into their new jobs.

6. Remember That You Get What You Pay For

Not long ago I invited a young leader to attend a roundtable discussion with leaders of large churches from my area. Forums like these are really beneficial because leaders on a similar level can talk about their struggles, share information, and learn things from each other. At one point in the discussion, the leaders talked about staffs and budgets. They went around the table, sharing the percentage of their budgets that were spent on staff. When it was this young leader's turn to talk, he quickly changed the subject.

Later when I talked to him, he told me that as they talked he realized that he was underpaying his staff, because the percentage of his budget was very low. He went home after that meeting, met with his church's board, and radically changed their pay scale. He says that his church now has the best team it's ever had, and it is worth every penny. He doesn't ever want to lose a valuable team member because of pay.

A leader may be able to hire people without paying them a lot of money. And occasionally, it may be possible to keep a few good people while not paying them very well. But in the long run, you get what you pay for. If you want to attract and keep good people, you need to pay them what they're worth. Otherwise, you will end up with people who are worth what you pay.

When you were a kid in science class, did you ever work with an old-fashioned balance? I mean the kind like the scales held in the hand of Blind Justice at courthouses. They're made up of two shallow dishes suspended from chains from a lever. If you put something that weighs an ounce in one dish, then you need to put something that weighs the same in the other dish for it to level out.

Leadership is like one of those scales. The rewards leaders give are counterbalanced by the results that their people give in return. In an organization, the scales are always moving, weighing more heavily on one side or the other. The scales naturally seek equilibrium where they are level, and they will not stay out of balance permanently.

Leaders always want greater results, because that is where the fulfillment of the vision comes from. The impact, profits, and success of an organization all come from this. As a leader, you have a choice. You can try to push your employees to give more, hoping to swing the balance in your favor. Or you can load up the rewards side—which is the only side you really have significant influence over—and wait for the balance to swing back to level as your employees respond by producing more. That's what 360-Degree Leaders do. They focus on what they can give, not what they can get. By giving more, they get more—and so do their people.

Section V Review
The Principles 360Degree Leaders Need to Lead Down

Are you relying on influence to lead down as a 360Degree Leader should? Review the seven principles you need to master in order to lead down:

1. Walk slowly through the halls.
2. See everyone as a "10."
3. Develop each team member as a person.
4. Place people in their strength zones.
5. Model the behavior you desire.
6. Transfer the vision.
7. Reward for results.

How well are you doing those seven things? If you're not sure, take the 360Degree Leadership assessment, offered free of charge to people who have purchased this book. Visit 360DegreeLeader.com for more information.

SECTION VI

THE VALUE OF 360-DEGREE LEADERS

Becoming a 360-Degree Leader isn't easy. It takes a lot of work, and it doesn't happen overnight. But it is worth every bit of the effort. In all my years of leadership teaching and consulting, I've never had a leader come to me and say, "We have too many leaders in our organization." So no matter how many good leaders your organization has, it needs more 360-Degree Leaders—and it needs you!

As you seek to grow as a leader, you will not always succeed. You will not always be rewarded the way you should be. Your leaders may not listen to you at times. Your peers may ignore you. Your followers won't follow. And the battle may feel like it's uphill all the way.

Please don't let that discourage you—not for long, anyway. By becoming a better leader, you add tremendous value to your organization. Everything rises and falls on leadership. The better 360-Degree Leader you become, the greater impact you will be able to make.

As you near the conclusion of this book, I want to give you some encouragement to keep on growing and learning. And I want to do it by letting you know why you should keep working to become a 360-Degree Leader. Keep reading. And on the days when the climb seems too steep, reflect on these

observations to help you remember why you should keep climbing and keep leading from the middle!

Value #1

A LEADERSHIP TEAM IS MORE EFFECTIVE THAN JUST ONE LEADER

Leadership is a complicated and difficult skill, one that no single person ever masters. There are some things I do well as a leader and some I do poorly. I'm sure it is the same for you. Even the greatest leaders from history had blind spots and weak areas.

For teams to develop at every level, they need leaders at every level.

So what's the solution? Organizations need to develop leadership teams at every level! A group of leaders working together is always more effective than one leader working alone. And for teams to develop at every level, they need leaders at every level.

Leaders Who Build Teams

As a leader in the middle, if you develop a team, you will be making your organization better and helping it to fulfill its vision. You will be adding value no matter where you serve in the organization. As you do that, keep the following ideas in mind:

1. Visionary Leaders Are Willing to Hire People Better Than Themselves

One leader I interviewed for this book said that a pivotal moment in his leadership journey occurred when someone asked him, "If you could hire someone who you knew would move the organization forward, but you would have to pay them more than your salary, would you hire them?" He said that question really arrested him. He thought about it long and hard, and when he finally concluded that he would, it changed the way he viewed his team and himself.

360-Degree Leaders are willing to hire people better than themselves. Why? Because their desire is to fulfill the vision. That is paramount. Anytime leaders find themselves being selfish or petty, they can be sure that they have wandered far from the vision. The way to get back on track is to put the vision first, and let everything else settle back to its rightful place.

2. Wise Leaders Shape Their People into a Team

Leaders begin to develop wisdom when they realize they can't do anything significant on their own. Once they realize that, leaders can also develop more humility and begin working to build a team.

Each of us needs others on the team to complete us. 360-Degree Leaders don't build teams so that others can take a menial role and serve them. They don't hire others to do the dirty work or to become errand runners. They look for the best

people they can find so that the team is the best it can be.

Chris Hodges said that one of the ways he learned the value of teamwork was by observing congressmen doing their work in Washington, D.C. When representatives want to propose a bill, the first thing they do is find a cosponsor. If they can find someone across the aisle, all the better. Chris takes that practice to heart. He said that before he tries to accomplish anything, the first thing he does is build a team of people who believe in what they are doing. A team of people will always be more powerful than an individual working alone.

3. Secure Leaders Empower Their Teams

Wayne Schmidt says, "No amount of personal competency compensates for personal insecurity." That is so true. Insecure leaders always have to go first. They are consumed with themselves. And that self-focus often drives them to bring second-best people around them.

On the other hand, secure leaders focus on others, and they want others to do well. They are happy to let their teams get all the credit. Their desire to see others succeed drives them to equip, train, and empower their people well. Anytime you focus on others, empowerment naturally becomes the by-product.

"No amount of personal competency compensates for personal insecurity."
—Wayne Schmidt

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4. Experienced Leaders Listen to Their Teams

Experienced leaders listen before they lead. General Tommy Franks said:

> Generals are not infallible. The army doesn't issue wisdom when it pins on the stars. Leading soldiers as a general means more than creating tactics and giving orders. Officers commanding brigades and battalions, the company commanders and the platoon leaders—all of them know more about their unit strengths and weaknesses than the general who leads them. So a successful general must listen more than he talks.[1]

Immature leaders lead first, then listen afterward—if they listen at all. Anytime leaders don't listen, they don't know the heartbeat of their people. They don't know what their followers need or want. They don't know what's going on. Good leaders understand that the people closest to the work are the ones who are really in the know.

Immature leaders lead first, then listen afterward.

If your people aren't following, you need to listen more. You don't need to be more forceful. You don't need to find more leverage. You don't need to come down on them. If you listen, they will be much more inclined to follow.

5. Productive Leaders Understand That One Is Too Small a Number to Achieve Greatness

Over the past twenty-five years, I've watched the trends in business and nonprofits, and the solutions that organizations use to improve and to solve problems. I've seen a definite pattern. Perhaps you've seen it too.

- In the 1980s, the word was *management*. The idea was that a manager was needed to create consistency. (The goal was to keep standards from slipping.)

- In the 1990s, the key concept was *leadership by an individual*. Organizations saw that leaders were needed because everything was changing so quickly.

- In the 2000s, the idea is *team leadership*. Because leading an organization has become so complex and multifaceted, the only way to make progress is to develop a team of leaders.

I think organizations are going to improve greatly as they develop teams, because leadership is so complex. You can't do just one thing well and be a good leader. You can't even lead in just one direction—you need the skills to lead up, across, and down! A leadership team will always be more effective than just one leader. And a team of 360-Degree Leaders will be more effective than other kinds of leadership teams.

Value #2

LEADERS ARE NEEDED AT EVERY LEVEL OF THE ORGANIZATION

In 2004 I was invited to teach a session on leadership to NFL coaches and scouts at the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Alabama. It was quite an experience. One of the things I taught that day was the Law of the Edge: "The difference between two equally talented teams is leadership."

After my session, I talked to a general manager of one of the teams, and he confirmed my observation. He said that because of the parity of talent in the NFL, the edge comes from leadership—from the owner, the head coach, the assistants, and right on down to the players. Leadership is what makes the difference at every level of the organization.

WHAT HAPPENS WITHOUT A LEADER

I know I say this so often that some people are tired of hearing it, but I believe it down to the core of my being. *Everything rises and falls on leadership*. It really does. If you don't believe it, just put together a group of people without a leader, and watch them. They will drift. When there is no good leader on a team, in a department, at the top of an organization, or heading a family, then the following results are inevitable.

Without a Leader, Vision Is Lost

If a team starts out with a vision but without a leader, it is in trouble. Why? Because vision leaks. And without a leader, the vision will dissipate and the team will drift until it has no sense of direction.

On the other hand, if a team starts with a leader but without a vision, it will do fine because it will eventually have a vision. I say that because if you had to define leaders with a single word, perhaps the best one would be *visionary*. Leaders are always headed somewhere. They have vision, and that vision gives not only *them* direction, but it gives their people direction.

Without a Leader, Decisions Are Delayed

I love a story that President Reagan told showing how he learned the need for decision making early in his life. When he was young, a kind aunt took him to have a pair of shoes custom made. The shoemaker asked him if he wanted his shoes to have square toes or round toes, but Reagan couldn't seem to make up his mind.

"Come back in a day or two and let me know what you decide," the shoemaker told him. But Reagan didn't go back. When the man saw him on the street and again asked him what kind of shoes he wanted, Reagan said, "I haven't made up my mind yet."

Not all good decision makers are leaders, but all good leaders are decision makers.

"Very well," the man responded. "Your shoes will be ready tomorrow."

When Reagan went to pick them up, he discovered that the toe of one shoe was round and the other was square. Reagan later said, "Looking at those shoes taught me a lesson. If you don't make your own decisions, somebody else makes them for you."

Not all good decision makers are leaders, but all good leaders are decision makers. Often it takes a leader to make decisions—and if not to make them, then to help others make them more quickly.

Without a Leader, Agendas Are Multiplied

When a team of people come together and no one is clearly the leader, then individuals begin to follow their own agendas. And before long, all the people are doing their own thing. Teams need leadership to provide a unifying voice.

Without a Leader, Conflicts Are Extended

One of the most important roles of a leader is conflict resolution. In the absence of clear leadership, conflicts always last longer and inflict more damage. Often it takes a leader to step up, step in, and bring everyone to the table to work things out. When you lead others, you should always be ready to do what it takes to help your people resolve their conflicts.

Without a Leader, Morale Is Low

Napoleon said, "Leaders are dealers in hope." When leaders are not present, people often lose hope and morale plummets. Why is that? Because *morale* can be defined as "faith in the leader at top."

WITHOUT A LEADER, PRODUCTION IS REDUCED

The first quality of leaders is the ability to make things happen. One of my favorite stories that illustrates this truth comes from the life of Charles Schwab, who once ran U.S. Steel. Schwab said:

> I had a mill manager who was finely educated, thoroughly capable and master of every detail of the business. But he seemed unable to inspire his men to do their best.
>
> "How is it that a man as able as you," I asked him one day, "cannot make this mill turn out what it should?"
>
> "I don't know," he replied. "I have coaxed the men; I have pushed them; I have sworn at them. I have done everything in my power. Yet they will not produce."
>
> It was near the end of the day; in a few minutes the night force would come on duty. I turned to a workman who was standing beside one of the red-mouthed furnaces and asked him for a piece of chalk.
>
> "How many heats has your shift made today?" I queried.
>
> "Six," he replied.
>
> I chalked a big "6" on the floor, and then passed along without another word. When the night shift came in they saw the "6" and asked about it.
>
> "The big boss was in here today," said the day men. "He asked us how many heats we had made, and we told him six. He chalked it down."
>
> The next morning I passed through the same mill. I saw that the "6" had been rubbed out and a big "7" written instead. The night shift had announced itself. That night I went back. The "7" had been erased, and a "10" swaggered in its place. The day force recognized no superiors. Thus a fine competition was started, and it went on until this mill, formerly the

> poorest producer, was turning out more than any other mill in the plant.[1]

Leaders are creative in finding ways to help others become productive. Sometimes it means laying out a challenge. Sometimes it means giving people training. Sometimes it means encouraging or putting up incentives. If the same thing worked for every person in every situation, then there would be no need for leaders. Because every person is different and circumstances are constantly changing, it takes a leader to figure out what's needed and to put that solution into action.

Without a Leader, Success Is Difficult

I believe many people want to dismiss the importance of leadership when it comes to organizational success. They don't see it—and in some cases they don't want to see it. That was the case for Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great*. I've met Collins, and I can tell you that he is an intelligent and perceptive guy. But he did not want to include leadership in the study that formed the foundation of the book. He wrote:

> I gave the research team explicit instructions to downplay the role of top executives so that we could avoid the simplistic "credit the leader" or "blame the leader" thinking common today . . . Every time we attribute everything to "Leadership," we're . . . simply admitting our ignorance . . . So, early in the project, I kept insisting, "Ignore the executives," but the research team kept pushing back . . . Finally—as should always be the case—the data won.[2]

Collins goes on to describe level five leaders—leaders who exhibit both a strong will and great humility—and how every

great company they studied was led by one such leader.

Leadership comes into play, even when you don't want it to. Your organization will not function the same without strong leaders in every department or division. It needs 360-Degree Leaders at every level in order to be well led.

Value #3

LEADING SUCCESSFULLY AT ONE LEVEL IS A QUALIFIER FOR LEADING AT THE NEXT LEVEL

Growing organizations are always looking for good people to step up to the next level and lead. How do they find out if a person is qualified to make that jump? By looking at that person's track record in his or her current position. The key to moving up as an emerging leader is to focus on leading well where you are, not on moving up the ladder. If you are a good 360-Degree Leader where you are, I believe you will be given an opportunity to lead at a higher level.

As you strive to become the best 360-Degree Leader you can be, keep the following things in mind:

1. Leadership Is a Journey That Starts Where You Are, Not Where You Want to Be

Recently while I was driving in my car, a vehicle to the left of me attempted to turn right from the middle lane and caused an accident. Fortunately, I was able to slow down quickly and lessen the impact; but still, my air bags deployed, and both cars were greatly damaged.

The first thing I noticed after I stopped and took stock of the situation was that the little computer screen in my car was showing my exact location according to the GPS system. I stared at it a moment, wondering why the car was telling me my exact latitude and longitude. And then I thought, *Of course!* If you're in real trouble and you call for help, the first thing emergency workers will want to know is your location. You can't get anywhere until you first know where you are.

Leadership is similar. To know how to get where you want to go, you need to know where you are. To get where you want to go, you need to focus on what you're doing now. Award-winning sportswriter Ken Rosenthals said, "Each time you decide to grow again, you realize you are starting at the bottom of another ladder." You need to have your eyes fixed on your current responsibilities, not the ones you wish to have someday. I've never known a person focused on yesterday to have a better tomorrow.

I've never known a person focused on yesterday to have a better tomorrow.

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2. Leadership Skills Are the Same, but the "League of Play" Changes

If you get promoted, don't think that because your new office is just a few feet down the hall from your old place that the difference is just a few steps. When you get "called up" to another level of leadership, the quality of your game must rise quickly.

No matter what level you're working on, leadership skills are needed at that level. Each new level requires a higher degree of skill. The easiest place to see this is in sports. Some players can make the jump from recreational league to high school. Fewer can make it from high school to college. And only a handful can make it to the professional level.

Your best chance of making it into the next "league of play" is to grow on the current level so that you will be able to go to the next level.

3. Great Responsibilities Come Only After Handling Small Ones Well

When I teach at a conference or go to a book signing, people sometimes confide in me that they desire to write books too. "How do I get started?" they ask.

"The only conquests which are permanent and leave no regrets are our conquests over ourselves."
—Napoleon Bonaparte

"How much writing do you do now?" I ask in return.

Some tell me about articles and other pieces they are writing, and I simply encourage them; but most of the time they sheepishly respond, "Well, I haven't really written anything yet."

"Then you need to start writing," I explain. "You've got to start small and work up to it."

Leadership is the same. You've got to start small and work up to it. A person who has never led before needs to try to

influence one other person. Someone who has some influence should try to build a team. Just start with what's necessary.

St. Francis of Assisi said, "Start doing what is necessary; then do what is possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible." All good leadership begins where you are. It was Napoleon who said, "The only conquests which are permanent and leave no regrets are our conquests over ourselves." The small responsibilities you have before you now comprise the first great leadership conquest you must make. Don't try to conquer the world until you've taken care of things in your own backyard.

4. Leading at Your Current Level Creates Your Resumé for Going to the Next Level

When you go to see a doctor for the first time, you are usually asked a lot of questions about your family history. In fact, there are usually more questions about that than there are about your lifestyle. Why? Because family history, more than anything else, seems to be what determines your health.

When it comes to leadership success, history is also similarly disproportionate. Your track record where you work now is what leaders will look at when trying to decide if you can do a job. I know that when I interview someone for a job, I put 90 percent of the emphasis on the track record.

If you want to get the chance to lead on another level, then your best chance for success is to lead well where you are now. Every day that you lead and succeed, you are building a resumé for your next job.

5. When You Can Lead Volunteers Well, You Can Lead Almost Anyone

At a recent President's Day conference where we were discussing leadership development, a CEO asked me, "How can I pick the best leader out of a small group of leaders? What do I look for?"

There are many things that indicate someone has leadership potential—the ability to make things happen, strong people skills, vision, desire, problem-solving skills, self-discipline, a strong work ethic. But there is one really great test of leadership that is almost foolproof, and that is what I suggested: "Ask them to lead a volunteer group."

If you want to test your own leadership, then try leading volunteers. Why is that so difficult? Because with volunteers, you have no leverage. It takes every bit of leadership skill you have to get people who don't have to do anything to do what you ask. If you're not challenging enough, they lose interest. If you push too hard, they drop out. If your people skills are weak, they won't spend any time with you. If you cannot communicate the vision, they won't know where to go or why.

If you lead others and your organization has any kind of community service focus, encourage the people on your team to volunteer. Then watch to see how they do. If they thrive in that environment, then you know that they possess many of the qualifications to go to another level in your organization.

Donald McGannon, former CEO of Westinghouse Broadcasting Corporation, stated, "Leadership is action, not position." Taking action—and helping others to do the same in a coordinated effort—is the essence of leadership. Do those

things where you are, and you won’t remain long there.

Value #4

GOOD LEADERS IN THE MIDDLE MAKE BETTER LEADERS AT THE TOP

In industrialized and free-market nations, we often take leadership for granted. A leadership culture has evolved to run the many organizations in such countries because commerce and industry are so strong. And because markets are so competitive, many of the leaders who emerge work hard to keep improving their leadership.

In developing countries, things are different. In the last five or six years, I've spent a lot of time teaching leadership around the world, and what I've found is that great leaders are few and far between in many of those countries—and 360-Degree Leaders are almost nonexistent. Most leaders in undeveloped countries are highly positional, and they try to keep as much distance as possible between their followers and themselves. It's one of the reasons there is such a difference between the haves and the have-nots. There are, of course, many exceptions to the broad generalization I'm making, but if you've traveled overseas a great deal, you have probably noticed it too.

In places where the top leaders try to keep everyone else down, the overall leadership is usually pretty poor. Why? Because when all the power is at the top and there are no

leaders in the middle to help them, the top leaders cannot lead very effectively.

Just in case you think I'm being too critical of leaders in emerging nations, I can tell you that this is a problem any place where there is one leader at the top and no 360-Degree Leaders to help lead. I personally experienced it in my own life in my first leadership position because I didn't try to identify, develop, or empower anyone else to lead. As a result, my leadership was weak, the overall effectiveness of the organization was far below its potential, and within two years after I left the organization, it shrank to half its former size.

Good leaders anywhere in an organization make better leaders at the top.

It's hard to overestimate the value of 360-Degree Leaders in the middle of an organization. In fact, good leaders anywhere in an organization make better leaders at the top—and make for a much better organization overall.

Every Time You Add a Good Leader, You Get a Better Team

Good leaders maximize the performance of those on their team. They set direction. They inspire their people and help them work together. They get results. This is easy to see in sports where the only thing that changes on a team is the coach. When a better leader comes in, the same players often perform at a much higher level than they did before.

The same thing happens in any kind of organization. When a

strong leader takes over a sales team, their performance goes up. When a good manager takes over at a restaurant, the operation runs more smoothly. When a better foreman runs the crew, the people get more done.

If you were to look at your entire organization (assuming it's not a mom-and-pop-sized operation), you would be able to locate the quality leaders even before you met them. All you would have to do is look for the teams with consistently high results. That is where the good leaders are.

Every Time You Add a Good Leader, All the Leaders in the Organization Get Better

I thought it was very interesting when Tiger Woods moved up from the amateur ranks to become a professional golfer. He was so good that the rest of the field looked weak. He won his first Master's Tournament at Augusta by a huge margin, and afterward he said he didn't even have his "A" game all the days he played. Many people feared that Woods would so dominate the game that nobody would ever be able to beat him.

But a funny thing happened after Woods had played for a few years. Everyone else's game went to another level. Why? Because strength brings out strength. The book of Proverbs says, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."[1]

When a good leader joins the team, it makes the other leaders take notice. Good leaders bring out the best, not only in their followers but also in other leaders. Good leaders raise the bar when it comes to performance and teamwork, and this often challenges other leaders in the organization to improve.

Good Leaders in the Middle Add Value to the Leaders Above Them

Leaders in the middle of an organization are closer to the people in the trenches than are the leaders on top. As a result, they know more about what's going on. They understand the people who are doing the work and the issues they face. They also have greater influence at those lower levels than the top leaders.

When there are no good leaders in the middle of an organization, then everyone and everything in the organization waits on the top leaders. On the other hand, when good leaders in the middle use their influence and commitment to assist the top leaders, they "stretch" the top leaders' influence beyond their reach. As a result, the top leaders are able to do more than they would ever be able to do on their own.

Good Leaders in the Middle Release Top Leaders to Focus on Their Priorities

The higher you climb in an organization as a leader, the more you will see but the less you will actually do. You can't move up and keep doing all the tasks that you do now. As you move up, you will have to hand off many of your old responsibilities to others. If the people who are supposed to do those tasks don't perform them well, then you will have to keep taking those things back. You probably will not be able to do your new responsibilities effectively if that happens.

Let's face it. There is no greater frustration for senior leaders than operating at a level below their own, because leaders in

the middle need continual hand holding. If a leader has to do that, the organization ends up paying high-level dollars to solve low-end problems.

For this reason, the leaders at the top can only be as good as the middle leaders working for them. When you perform with excellence in the middle, you free up your leaders to perform with excellence above you.

Good Leaders in the Middle Motivate Leaders Above Them to Continue Growing

When a leader grows, it shows. Growing leaders continually improve in their personal effectiveness and their leadership. Most of the time that makes their leaders want to keep growing. Part of that comes from healthy competition. If you're in a race and someone is getting ready to pass you, it makes you want to pick up your pace and move faster.

There is also the contribution factor. When team members see others on the team making a significant contribution, it inspires them to step up. There is a natural joy that comes from being on a team that is functioning on an extremely high level.

Good Leaders in the Middle Give the Organization a Future

No organization keeps moving forward and growing using yesterday's ideas and ways of doing things. Future success requires innovation and growth. And it requires the continual emergence of new leaders. In *The Bible on Leadership*

(Amacon, 2002), Lorin Woolfe writes, “The ultimate test for a leader is not whether he or she makes smart decisions and takes decisive action, but whether he or she teaches others to be leaders and builds an organization that can sustain its success even when he or she is not around.”

Today’s workers are tomorrow’s leaders in the middle of the organization. And today’s leaders in the middle will be tomorrow’s leaders at the top. While you function as a 360-Degree Leader in the middle of the organization, if you keep growing you will probably get your opportunity to become a top leader. But at the same time, you need to be looking at the people working for you and thinking about how you can prepare them to join you and eventually take your place in the middle. You will be able to spot potential leadership candidates because they will be more than just good workers.

TODAY'S WORKERS	TOMORROW'S LEADERS
Implement current ideas	Generate new ideas
Identify and define problems	Solve problems
Get along with the people they have	Attract sharp people
Work within the current framework	Take risks
Value consistency	Value and spot opportunities

Leadership expert Max DePree said, “Succession is one of the key responsibilities of leadership.” That is true. There is no success without a successor. Being a 360-Degree Leader is about more than just doing a good job now and making things easier today for the people working above and below you. It is about making sure the organization has a chance to be good tomorrow too. As you teach others to perform 360-Degree

Leadership, you will be giving the organization greater depth as well as strength. You will be helping to raise the bar in such a way that everybody wins.

Value #5

360-DEGREE LEADERS POSSESS QUALITIES EVERY ORGANIZATION NEEDS

When I was outlining this book, I talked to a friend about the whole concept of 360-Degree Leadership, and he asked, "What makes a 360-Degree Leader different from any other kind of a leader?" When I started to explain the concept of leading up, across, and down, he said, "Okay, but why are they able to lead in every direction? What makes them tick?"

I chewed on his question for a while as we talked about it, and I finally landed this answer: "360-Degree Leaders have certain qualities that enable them to lead in every direction, and that is what makes them valuable to an organization."

"You need to put that in the book," he advised, "because people can try to do all the right actions, but if they don't embrace those qualities internally, they may never get it."

I don't know if you've ever thought about it before, but what adds greater value to the people around you: what you *say* or what you *are*? You may not be aware of it, but you can actually add value to others simply by possessing the right qualities. The higher you go in an organization, the more that applies.

360-Degree Leaders, as I envision them, possess qualities

that every organization wants to see in all of its employees, but especially in its leaders. Those qualities are adaptability, discernment, perspective, communication, security, servanthood, resourcefulness, maturity, endurance, and countability.

ADAPTABILITY—QUICKLY ADJUSTS TO CHANGE

People from the middle down are never the first to know anything in an organization. They are usually not the decision makers or policy writers. As a result, they must learn to adapt quickly.

When it comes to leading in the middle, the more quickly you can adapt to change, the better it will be for the organization. Here's why. All organizations contain early, middle, and late adapters. The early adapters are won over by new ideas quickly, and they are ready to run with them. Middle adapters take more time. And then the late adapters slowly (and sometimes reluctantly) accept the change.

Since you, as a leader in the middle, are going to be asked to help the people who follow you to accept the change, you need to process change quickly—the quicker the better. That may mean there will be times when you must embrace a change before you are even ready to do so emotionally. In such cases, the key is your ability to trust your leaders. If you can trust them, you will be able to do it. Just keep reminding yourself, *Blessed are the flexible, for they will not be bent out of shape.*

Blessed are the flexible, for they will not be bent out of shape.

DISCERNMENT—UNDERSTANDS THE REAL ISSUES

The president of the United States, an old priest, a young mountain climber, and the world's smartest man were riding together on a private plane when it suddenly suffered engine trouble. The pilot scrambled from the cockpit saying, "We're going down; save yourselves!" He then jumped out of the plane and activated his parachute.

The four passengers looked around but found only three parachutes.

The president took one and—as he jumped—said, "I must save myself for the sake of national security."

The world's smartest man grabbed one and jumped, saying, "I am an invaluable resource to the world and must save my intellect."

The old priest looked at the mountain climber and said, "Save yourself, my son. I've been in the Lord's service for forty years, and I'm not afraid to meet my Maker."

"No sweat, Padre," answered the young man. "The world's smartest man just jumped with my backpack!"

Good leaders cut through the clutter to see the real issues. They know what really matters. There's an old saying that a smart person believes only half of what he hears, but a really smart person knows which half to believe. 360-Degree Leaders cultivate that ability.

PERSPECTIVE—SEES BEYOND THEIR OWN VANTAGE POINT

Jack Welch said, "Leadership is seeing opportunity in tough times." That ability is a function of perspective. One of the advantages of being a leader in the middle of the organization is that you can see more than others do. Most people have the ability to see things on their own level and one level removed from their own.

"Leadership is seeing opportunity in tough times."
—JACK WELCH

The people at the bottom can see and understand things on their own level and, if they're perceptive, also on yours. The people at the top can see and understand things on their own level and on one below theirs, which would be yours. But as a leader in the middle, you should be able to see and understand not only things on your own level but also one level up and one level down. That gives you a really unique advantage—and opportunity.

COMMUNICATION—LINKS TO ALL LEVELS OF THE ORGANIZATION

Because you have a unique perspective and understanding of the organization that others above and below you may not have, you should strive to use your knowledge not only for your own advantage but also to communicate both up and down the chain of command. We often think of communication

in organizations as being primarily top-down. Leaders at the top cast vision, set direction, reward progress, and so forth. Good communication, however, is a 360-Degree proposition. In fact, sometimes the most critical communication is from the bottom up.

In *Leading Up* (Crown, 2001), Michael Useem gives examples of important messages that were sent "up the chain of command." Some messages were heeded and acted upon with positive effect. For example, when trade deputy Charlene Barshefsky came to the table to negotiate a trade deal between the U.S. and China, allowing China to enter the World Trade Organization, Barshefsky had previously listened to concerns of business and labor leaders, and she represented those interests at the table. The result was a successful negotiation.

Other messages that were sent "up" were ignored. Useem says that when General Roméo Dallaire, commander of the United Nations' troops in Rwanda, tried to persuade his superiors to let him take aggressive action to head off what he saw as the impending threat of genocide, his request was denied. The result was disastrous—the death of more than 800,000 people as the Hutus slaughtered the Tutsis.

"The biggest job in getting any movement off the ground is to keep together the people who form it."
—MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The biggest job in getting any movement off the ground is to keep together the people who form it. This task requires more than a common aim; it demands a philosophy that wins and holds the people's allegiance; and

it depends upon open channels of communication between the people and their leaders."

Security—Finds Identity in Self, Not Position

I love the story of Karl, who enjoyed a good laugh at his office after he attached a small sign to his door—"I'm the Boss!" The laughter was even louder when he returned from lunch and saw that someone had made an addition to his sign. Next to it was a yellow Post-it note on which someone had scribbled, "Your wife called and said she wants her sign back."[1]

It takes a secure person to be a good leader in the middle of an organization. In our culture, people ask, "What do you do?" not, "Who are you?" or, "How are you making a difference?" Most people place too much emphasis on titles and position instead of on impact.

But if you have been effective as a leader in the middle for any length of time, you understand that your role is important. Organizations don't succeed without leaders who do their job well in the middle. 360-Degree Leaders must try to be secure enough in who they are *not* to worry about where they *are*.

The true measure of leaders is not the number of people who serve them but the number of people they serve.

If you are ever tempted to spend too much time and energy on getting out of the middle, then change your focus. Instead,

put your effort toward reaching your potential and doing the most good you can where you are. Anytime you focus on developing your position instead of yourself, you are in effect asking, *Am I becoming the person others want me to be?* But if you focus on developing yourself instead of your title or position, then the question you will repeatedly ask is, *Am I becoming all I can be?*

SERVANTHOOD—DOES WHATEVER IT TAKES

I believe the true measure of leaders is not the number of people who serve them but the number of people they serve. 360-Degree Leaders adopt an attitude of servant first, leader second. Everything they do is measured in light of the value it can add. They serve the mission of the organization and lead by serving those on the mission with them.

Robert Greenleaf, founder of Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, gave an excellent perspective on this: "The servant-leader is a servant first. It all begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant—first to make sure that the other people's highest priority needs are served."

How do you know whether you are motivated by the desire to serve as a leader? It's actually very simple. You have the heart of a servant if it doesn't bother you to serve others. If you lack a servant's attitude, then it grates on you when you do have to serve.

RESOURCEFULNESS—FINDS CREATIVE WAYS TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN

With presses set to run three million copies of Theodore Roosevelt's 1912 convention speech, the speech's publisher discovered that permission had not been obtained to use photos of Roosevelt and his running mate, Governor Hiram Johnson of California. And that was a problem because copyright law put the penalty for such an oversight at one dollar per copy.

The quick-thinking chairman of the campaign committee was a resourceful leader. He dictated a telegram to the Chicago studio that had taken the pictures: "Planning to issue three million copies of Roosevelt speech with pictures of Roosevelt and Johnson on cover. Great publicity opportunity for photographers. What will you pay us to use your photographs?"

The reply: "Appreciate opportunity, but can pay only $250." The deal was done, the presses ran, and a potential disaster was averted.

Leaders in the middle of an organization need to be especially resourceful, because they have less authority and fewer resources. If you desire to be an effective 360-Degree Leader, then get used to doing more with less.

MATURITY—PUTS THE TEAM BEFORE SELF

How do you define *maturity*? In the context of leadership, I define it as "putting the team before oneself." Nobody who possesses an unrelenting me-first attitude is able to develop

much influence with others. To lead others, you need to put the team first.

I recently read a story about a group of principals in the Nashville school system who realized that for their students to succeed, they needed to employ a bilingual specialist. The only problem was that there was no money in their budgets to do it. What was their solution? They set aside the money that would have been used for their own raises to hire the person they needed. The team and the children they support were more important to them than personal gain. That's mature leadership!

In leadership, maturity is putting the team before oneself.

ENDURANCE—REMAINS CONSISTENT IN CHARACTER AND COMPETENCE OVER THE LONG HAUL

A couple of years ago when I was in Africa teaching on leadership, I had the opportunity to go on a photo safari. It was an incredible experience. One of the things we did while out in the bush was follow, for about an hour, a pair of cheetahs that were hunting. Cheetahs are amazing animals. They are the fastest land animals on the planet, with the ability to run at an amazing seventy miles per hour. But cheetahs are pure sprinters. If they don't run down their prey with their first burst, then they go hungry. The reason they can't run long is that they have small hearts.

360-Degree Leaders can't afford to have small hearts. With all the challenges that come to leaders—especially leaders in the middle—leadership is an endurance race. To succeed, 360-Degree Leaders need to respond well to challenges and keep responding well.

COUNTABILITY—CAN BE COUNTED ON WHEN IT COUNTS

In *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork*, one of my favorite laws is the Law of Countability: "Teammates must be able to count on each other when it counts." I love that law not only because it is true and very important for team building, but also because it gave me the opportunity to make up a word. I think *countability* really captures the idea of people being able to depend on one another no matter what.

When you trust a leader, when he or she possesses countability, it has greater value than just knowing you can count on that leader. It means you really do count on them. You depend on them for your success. You're in it together, and you will fail or succeed as a team. That kind of character really makes a difference in a culture where most people have an every-man-for-himself attitude.

I believe most leaders in the middle of organizations don't get enough credit, because the middle is where most organizations succeed or fail. The leaders at the top can make only so big an impact on any organization, and the workers in the trenches can do only so much. They are often more limited

by the leaders above them than they are by resources or their own talent. Everything truly does rise and fall on leadership. If you want your organization to succeed, then you need to succeed as a 360-Degree Leader.

One of the finest examples I've ever encountered that shows the value and impact of a leader in the middle can be found in the life of General George C. Marshall. When most people think of the leadership that won World War II for the Allies, they think of leaders like Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt. And while I acknowledge that the war would not have been won without those two great leaders, I also believe it would not have been won without the effective 360-Degree Leadership of Marshall.

Marshall was always a good soldier, and everywhere he served, he led well—up, across, and down. He attended the Virginia Military Institute, where he graduated as first captain. He went on to serve in the infantry in the U.S. Army. Marshall was such a good student and influenced his superiors so much that after finishing first in his class at the School of the Line at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and then taking a more advanced course, he was kept as an instructor.

Marshall never failed to add value wherever he served—in the Philippines (two tours); in France during World War I; as a senior aide to General Pershing during a tour in China; as the chief of instruction at the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia; as well as at other posts. It's been said that Marshall "rose through the ranks of the military with a record of achievement rarely equaled by any other."[2]

Marshall's career was stellar, but you can really see him

making a significant impact as the appointed U.S. Army chief of staff. From that position, he led up to the president, he led across to the other Allied commanders, and he led down with his own senior officers.

When he entered that office, the United States' military forces were anemic and ill equipped. All the branches of service combined comprised fewer than 200,000 people. With war breaking out in Europe, Marshall knew what he needed to do—build a large, well-prepared, and powerfully equipped army. And he set about the task immediately. In four years' time, Marshall expanded the military to a well-trained and well-equipped force of 8,300,000.[3] Winston Churchill called Marshall "the organizer of victory."

That alone would make Marshall a hero of World War II, but that wasn't his only contribution. He worked tirelessly throughout the war and continually showed an ability to lead up, across, and down. President Roosevelt found his advice invaluable and said that he could not sleep unless he knew Marshall was in the country. And Roosevelt requested Marshall's presence at every major war conference, from Argentia, Newfoundland, in 1941, to Potsdam in 1945.[4]

Marshall continually had to lead across in the area of military strategy. He is credited by some for ensuring cooperation between the Allied forces during the war. He went head-to-head against other generals when it came to strategy too. MacArthur wanted the United States to shift its primary focus to the Pacific theater of operations before defeating Germany. The British wanted to employ what was called the Mediterranean strategy against Hitler's forces. But Marshall

was convinced that to win the war, the Allies had to cross the English Channel and engage the Germans in France.[5]

Marshall won everyone over, and for a year he and his general planned the invasion of Normandy. After the war, Churchill said of Marshall: "Hitherto I had thought of Marshall as a rugged soldier and a magnificent organizer and builder of armies—the American Carnot [a man known as the "organizer of victory" for the French Revolution]. But now I saw that he was a statesman with a penetrating and commanding view of the whole scene."[6]

Marshall was also as effective leading down as he was leading up and across. The people who served under him held a deep respect for him. After the war, General Dwight D. Eisenhower said to Marshall, "In every problem and in every test I have faced during the war years, your example has been an inspiration and your support has been my greatest strength. My sense of obligation to you is equaled only by the depth of pride and satisfaction as I salute you as the greatest soldier of your time and a true leader of democracy."[7]

Even after the war, Marshall continued his influence as a 360-Degree Leader. He was asked to serve as secretary of state by President Truman. And when a plan was needed to rebuild the countries of Europe in the wake of such a devastating war, Marshall gave his support in a speech at Harvard University to what he called the European Recovery Plan. I've read that when President Truman's aides wanted to call it the Truman Plan, the president wouldn't hear of it. He valued and respected his secretary of state's leadership so much that he called it the Marshall Plan.

There are not a lot of people about whom you can say that if he or she had not lived, the face of the world would look very different. Yet that is true for George Marshall. Europe, Asia, and the United States are different from what they would have been without his influence. There are few better examples of 360-Degree Leadership. In the end, Marshall's influence was so great and his service so selfless that he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. He is the only professional soldier in history to whom it has been given.

We can't all hope to make a global impact as Marshall did. But that isn't important. What matters is that we are willing to do what it takes to make a positive impact wherever we find ourselves in life—to add value in any way we can to others. I believe there is no better way to increase your influence and improve your chances of doing something significant than to become a 360-Degree Leader. As a 360-Degree Leader you can influence others no matter where you are in the organization, no matter what title or position you have, no matter what kind of people you work with. I hope you will keep working at it, and keep making a positive impact.

Section VI Review

The Value of 360Degree Leaders

On those days when you wonder whether it's worth it to develop as a 360Degree Leader and try to lead from the middle of the organization, remind yourself of the great value 360Degree Leaders add: 1. A leadership team is more effective than just one leader.

2. Leaders are needed at every level of the organization.
3. Leading successfully at one level is a qualifier for leading at the next level.
4. Good leaders in the middle make better leaders at the top.
5. 360Degree leaders possess qualities every organization needs.

If you still haven't taken the 360Degree Leadership assessment, don't forget that it is offered free of charge to people who have purchased this book. Visit 360DegreeLeader.com for more information.

SPECIAL SECTION

CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT UNLEASHES 360-DEGREE LEADERS

If you are the top leader in your organization, then I want to spend a few moments with you in this special section. Many leaders in the middle of organizations are highly frustrated. They have great desire to lead and succeed; yet their leaders are often a greater hindrance than help to them. More than two-thirds of the people who leave their jobs do so because of an ineffective or incompetent leader. People don't leave their company—they leave their leader.

As a top leader, you have the power the way nobody else does to create a positive leadership culture where potential leaders flourish. If you create that environment, then people with leadership potential will learn, gain experience, and come into their own. They will become the kind of 360-Degree Leaders who make an organization great.

If you're willing to work at making your organization a place where leaders lead and do it well, you'll need to shift your focus from

leading the people and the organization, to . . .
leading the people, finding leaders, and leading the organization, to . . .
leading the people, developing the leaders, and leading the organization, to . . .
leading and empowering the leaders while they lead the organization, to . . .

serving the leaders as they lead the organization.

Depending on where you're starting from, that process may take several years, and it may be a tough climb. But think of the alternative. Where will your organization be in five years if you don't raise up leaders in an environment that unleashes 360-Degree Leaders?

THE LEADER'S DAILY DOZEN

If you're ready to revolutionize your organization, then I want to encourage you to start the process by adopting what I call the "Leader's Daily Dozen." Every morning when you get up and get ready to lead your organization, make a commitment to these twelve power-unleashing activities.

1. PLACE A HIGH VALUE ON PEOPLE

The first shift for turning your organization into a leader-friendly environment must occur inside of you. You only commit yourself to things you value. And fundamentally, if you don't value people, you will never create a culture that develops leaders.

Most top leaders focus on two things: the vision and the bottom line. The vision is what usually excites us most, and taking care of the bottom line keeps us in business. But between the vision and the bottom line are all the people in your organization. What's ironic is that if you ignore the people and only pay attention to these other two things, you

will lose the people and the vision (and probably the bottom line). But if you focus on the people, you have the potential to win the people, the vision, and the bottom line.

When Jim Collins studied great companies and came to discover and define what he called level five leaders, he noticed that these excellent leaders didn't take the credit for their organization's accomplishments. In fact, they were incredibly humble and gave the credit to their people. Without a doubt, level five leaders place a high value on people.

Many companies say they value their people and their customers. Those are trendy things to say, but talk is cheap. If you want to know whether this is a value in your organization, then talk to people who know your organization well but don't work for it. What would they say? Their answers would probably give you the most accurate picture.

But you know your own heart better than anyone else. It all starts with you. You need to ask yourself: *Do I place a high value on people?*

2. Commit Resources to Develop People

Once when I was flying to Dallas with Zig Ziglar, he asked if I ever received letters from people thanking me. When I acknowledged that I did, he asked, "When you get those letters, what do people thank you for?" I had never really thought about that before, but the answer was clear. People almost always said thanks for a book I had written or some other resource I had produced.

"It's the same for me," Zig said. "Isn't that interesting? You

and I are known for our speaking, but that's not what prompts people to write."

I've done a lot of speaking over the past thirty-five years. I love doing it, and I do think it has value. Events are great for creating lots of energy and enthusiasm, but if you want to facilitate growth, you need resources. They are better for development because they are process oriented. You can take them with you. You can refer back to them. You can dig into the meat and skip the fluff—and you can go at your own pace.

Once when I was teaching leaders at a large corporation, one of the event's organizers stated from the platform that people were their organization's most appreciable asset. I applauded his sentiment, but I also expanded on it for the leaders in the room. His statement is true only if you develop those people.

It takes a lot of effort to develop leaders. The first question a top leader usually asks is, "What is it going to cost?" My answer is, "Whatever amount it costs, it won't be as high as the cost of not developing your people."

Once again, I have a question for you. Ask yourself, *Am I committed to providing resources for leadership development?*

3. PLACE A HIGH VALUE ON LEADERSHIP

People who run a one-person business may not have to worry about leadership. But for people who lead organizations, leadership is always an issue. Anytime you have two or more people working together, leadership comes into play. In some organizations, all the emphasis is placed on effort, and

leadership isn't even on people's radar. What a mistake.

All good leaders recognize the importance of leadership and place a high value on it. I love what General Tommy Franks said about the ultimate leaders in the middle of the military—the sergeants:

> The months in the desert had reinforced my longstanding conviction that sergeants really were the backbone of the Army. The average trooper depends on NCOs for leadership by personal example. I thought of Sam Long and Scag, of Staff Sergeant Kittle—they had been examples of what a sergeant should be. If a noncommissioned officer is dedicated to his troops, the squad or section will have hard, realistic training, hot food when it's available, and the chance to take an occasional shower. If a sergeant is indifferent to the needs of his soldiers, their performance will suffer, and their lives might be wasted. A smart officer works hard to develop good NCOs.[1]

The American military understands the value of leadership and always places a high value on it. If you value leadership, leaders will emerge to add value to the organization.

This time the question to ask yourself is very simple: *Do I place a high value on leadership in my organization?*

4. Look for Potential Leaders

If leadership is on your radar and you value it, you will continually be on the lookout for potential leaders. Several years ago I did a lesson for one of my leadership development tape clubs that taught leaders what to look for in potential leaders. It was called "Searching for Eagles," and for many years it was our most requested lesson. These are the top ten characteristics of "eagles":

- They make things happen.
- They see opportunities.
- They influence the opinions and actions of others.
- They add value to you.
- They draw winners to them.
- They equip other eagles to lead.
- They provide ideas that help the organization.
- They possess an uncommonly great attitude.
- They live up to their commitments.
- They show fierce loyalty to the organization and the leader.

As you begin to search for potential leaders, look for people who possess these qualities. Meanwhile, ask yourself: *Am I continually looking for potential leaders?*

5. Know and Respect Your People

As you find leaders and develop them, you will get to know them better as individuals. I want to encourage you to use the guidelines in the "Walk Slowly Through the Halls" chapter to enhance that process. But there are also other characteristics that are common to all leaders that you should keep in mind as you take them through the development process.

- People want to see results.
- People want to be effective—they want to do what they do well.

- People want to be in the picture.
- People want to be appreciated.
- People want to be a part of the celebration.

As you select people to develop, work to strike a balance between these universal desires and the individual needs of your people. Try to tailor the development process for each individual as much as you can. To do that, continually ask yourself, *Do I know and respect my people?*

6. Provide Your People with Leadership Experiences

It is impossible to learn leadership without actually leading. After all, leadership is action. One of the places where many top leaders miss developmental opportunities comes in what we delegate. Our natural tendency is to give others tasks to perform rather than leadership functions to fulfill. We need to make a shift. If we don't delegate leadership—with authority as well as accountability—our people will never gain the experience they need to lead well.

It is impossible to learn leadership without actually leading.

The question you must ask yourself is, *Am I providing my people with leadership experiences?*

7. Reward Leadership Initiative

Taking initiative is such an important part of leadership. The best leaders are proactive. They make things happen. Most top leaders are initiators, but that doesn't mean that every top leader feels comfortable when others use their initiative. Just because they trust their own instincts doesn't mean they trust the instincts of their people.

It's true that emerging leaders often want to take the lead before they are really ready to. But potential leaders can only become full-fledged leaders if they are allowed to develop and use their initiative. So what's the solution? Good timing! If you rush the timing, you short-circuit the growth process. If you hold leaders back when they're ready to move, you stunt their growth.

One of the things that can help you navigate the timing issue is recognizing whether your mind-set is one of scarcity or abundance. If you believe that the world has only a limited amount of resources, a finite number of opportunities, and so forth, then you may be reluctant to let your leaders take risks—because you may think that the organization will not be able to recover from mistakes. On the other hand, if you believe opportunities are unlimited, that resources are renewable and unlimited, you will be more willing to take risks. You will not doubt your ability to recover.

How are you doing in this area? Ask yourself, *Do I reward leadership initiative?*

8. Provide a Safe Environment Where People

ASK QUESTIONS, SHARE IDEAS, AND TAKE RISKS

Pulitzer prize-winning historian Garry Wills said, "Leaders have a say in what they are being led to. A leader who neglects that soon finds himself without followers." It takes secure leaders at the top to let the leaders working for them be full participants in the organization's leadership process. If leaders in the middle question them, they don't take it personally. When they share ideas, the top leaders cannot afford to feel threatened. When people lower than they are in the organization want to take risks, they need to be willing to give them room to succeed or fail.

Leadership by its very nature challenges. It challenges out-of-date ideas. It challenges old ways of doing things. It challenges the status quo. Never forget that what gets rewarded gets done. If you reward complacency, you will get complacency from your leaders in the middle. But if you can remain secure and let them find new ways of doing things—ways that are better than yours—the organization will move forward more quickly.

"Leaders have a say in what they are being led to. A leader who neglects that soon finds himself without followers."
—GARRY WILLS

Instead of trying to be Mr. Answerman or Ms. Fix-it, when your leaders start coming into their own, move more into the background. Try taking on the role of wise counselor and chief encourager. Welcome the desire of your best leaders to innovate and improve the organization. After all, I think you'll

agree that a win for the organization is a win for you.

So what role are you playing in your organization? Are you "the expert," or are you more of an advisor and advocate? Ask yourself, *Am I providing an environment where people can ask questions, share ideas, and take risks?*

9. Grow with Your People

I've talked to a lot of top leaders during my career, and I've detected a number of different attitudes toward growth. Here's how I would summarize them:

- I have already grown.
- I want my people to grow.
- I'm dedicated to helping my people grow.
- I want to grow along with my people.

Guess which attitude fosters an organization where people are growing?

When people in an organization see the top leader growing, it changes the culture of the organization. It immediately removes many barriers between the top leader and the rest of the people, putting you on the same level with them, which makes the top leader much more human and accessible. It also sends a clear message to everyone: make growth a priority.

So the question I want you to ask yourself is very simple: *Am I growing with my people?*

10. Draw People with High Potential into Your Inner Circle

When Mark Sanborn, author of *The Fred Factor*, spoke at one of our leadership events, he made a remark that really stuck with me: "It's better to have a group of deer led by a lion than a group of lions led by a deer." Why? Because even if you have a group of deer, if they are led by a lion, they will act like a pride of lions. Isn't that a great analogy? It's really true. When people spend time with someone and are directed by them, they learn to think the way that person thinks and do what that person does. Their performance starts to rise according to the capability of their leader.

When I was working on *Developing the Leaders Around You*, I often took an informal poll at conferences to find out how people came to be leaders. I asked if they became leaders (a) because they were given a position; (b) because there was a crisis in the organization; or (c) because they had been mentored. More than 80 percent indicated that they were leaders because someone had mentored them in leadership—had taken them through the process.

The best way to develop high-caliber leaders is to have them mentored by a high-caliber leader. If you lead your organization, you are probably the best (or at least one of the best) leader in the organization. If you are not already doing so, you need to handpick the people with the greatest potential, invite them into your inner circle, and mentor them. It doesn't matter if you do it with one or with a dozen, whether you work one-on-one or in a group setting. The main thing is that you need to be giving your best to your best people.

Are you doing that? What is your answer to the question, *Am I drawing people with potential into my inner circle?*

11. Commit Yourself to Developing a Leadership Team

When I started out as a leader, I tried to do everything myself. Until I was about age forty, I thought I could do it all. After my fortieth birthday, I finally realized that if I didn't develop other leaders, my potential was only a fraction of what it could be. So for the next decade, developing people into good leaders was my focus. But even that has its limitations. I realize now that to reach the highest level of leadership, I must continually develop leadership teams.

Let's face it. No one does everything well. I can't do it all—can you? I wrote the *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, which contains every leadership principle I know based on a lifetime of learning and leading. I can't do all of the twenty-one laws well. So I need help.

You do too. If you want your organization to reach its potential, if you want it to go from good to great (or even average to good), you need to develop a team of leaders, people who can fill in each others' gaps, people who challenge and sharpen each other. If we try to do it all ourselves, we will never get beyond the glass ceiling of our own leadership limitations.

How are you in this area? Ask yourself, *Am I committed to developing a leadership team?*

12. UNLEASH YOUR LEADERS TO LEAD

As leaders, if we feel any uncertainty or insecurity about the leadership development process, it is usually not related to the training we give. The uncertainty we feel comes when we contemplate releasing our leaders to lead. It is not dissimilar to what parents feel with their kids. My children are grown and have families of their own, but when they were teenagers, the hardest thing for my wife and me was releasing them to go their own way and make their own decisions. It is scary, but if you don't let them try out their wings, they will never learn to fly.

As I have grown older, I have come to think of myself as a lid lifter. That is my main function as an organizational leader. If I can lift the leadership lids for the members of my team, then I am doing my job. The more barriers I remove for my people, the more likely they are to rise up to their potential. And what's really great is that when the top leaders are lid lifters for the leaders in the middle, then those leaders become load lifters for the ones at the top.

When the top leaders are lid lifters for the leaders in the middle, then those leaders become load lifters for the ones at the top.

So here is the last question. Ask yourself, *Am I unleashing my leaders to lead?*

If you become dedicated to developing and releasing 360-Degree Leaders, your organization will change—and so will your life. I've found that leaders who go from leading alone to successfully developing 360-Degree Leaders go through three stages:

STAGE 1: THE LONELINESS OF LEADING—"I am the only leader." When you are the one leader, you really have to personally lead everything.

STAGE 2: THE LIFTING OF A LEADER—"I'm one of only a few leaders." When you begin leading and developing other leaders, then you lead only some of the more important things.

STAGE 3: THE LEGACY OF A LEADER—"I'm only one of many leaders." When you develop 360-Degree Leaders, then you lead only a very few strategic things.

That's the situation Tom Mullins finds himself in at this point in his career. Tom is the senior pastor of Christ Fellowship, a very large congregation in West Palm Beach, Florida. Tom was the founding pastor of his church, so when he first started, he did everything. If a task was to be accomplished, if a goal was to be met, if a program was to be started, Tom had to lead it personally.

But Tom is an outstanding leader. He had no desire to go it alone, to be Mr. Answerman. As the organization grew, Tom dedicated himself not only to helping people but also to developing leaders. The more leaders he developed, the less time he needed to be on the front lines. For years, Tom has been developing and empowering 360-Degree Leaders to lead.

Today, more than ten thousand people attend his church every weekend. There are hundreds of programs and activities going on every week. The church is highly active in the community, building houses for the poor and feeding people. They are constantly reaching out to others. And where is

Tom? He's in the middle of it all, coaching, advising, and encouraging. That's where he now leads from most of the time. Rarely is he the top leader in any endeavor anymore. Tom said he is more fulfilled by seeing others succeed—whether it's teaching on the platform or leading the team—than he is by taking the point position. The organization is succeeding beyond his wildest dreams as a result.

Isn't that what we all want as leaders—for our people and our organizations to succeed? Legendary Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu said, "A leader is best when the people barely know he exists." That's what the best leaders do—help others succeed. They lead, empower, and then get out of the way. If you create an environment that develops 360-Degree Leaders, that is what you will someday be able to do.

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THE 360° LEADER WORKBOOK

SECTION 1

THE MYTHS OF LEADING FROM THE MIDDLE OF AN ORGANIZATION

Myth #1: The Position Myth

Answer the following questions as TRUE or FALSE:

A. My position within the organization limits my ability to lead others.

B. The opportunity to lead will come only when I'm at the top of my organization.

C. My influence with others is directly related to my title.

D. It is "out-of-line" to try to influence those above me, and I resent it when someone who reports to me tries to influence me.

If you answered "True" to question A or C, consider the following:

1. Do individuals have to be at the top of the organizational chart to develop relationships and persuade others to like working with them?
2. Do people only work with you because they have to?
3. How can you develop appropriate relationships with the people on your team or in your organization?

4. Do people need to possess the top title to achieve results and help others become productive?
5. What has a coworker—besides the president or CEO—taught you in the past year?
6. What unique skills do you possess that you can pass on to others? This week, try to find an opportunity where you assist a coworker on your level in a project. You may even have an opportunity to teach that person a new skill or another way to approach a challenge.

If you answered "True" to question B or D, consider the following:

1. Where do leaders get their start? William Wallace and Winston Churchill weren't the top-ranking officers in the first battles they fought. Mary Kay Ash didn't own the first company she worked for. Martin Luther King Jr. started his ministry as an assistant pastor.
2. What would happen if you began to think and act like a leader in your current position? Would you approach your job differently? Would you approach the people you work with differently? Explain.
3. Did Wallace, Churchill, Ash, and King wait until they were given a title or top position to influence others?
4. How do you express your leadership potential to those around you?
5. What could you gain by considering the ideas of those who work for you? This week, do more than just what is expected or required of you. Look for opportunities to

step up and take responsibility for a project. Be open to the ideas of others. Approach your team with the attitude that you or someone who works for you could be the next "great leader."

Myth #2: The Destination Myth

Answer the following questions as TRUE or FALSE:

A. To learn leadership skills I must first be in a position of leadership.
B. It's too risky to emerge as a midlevel leader. If I make mistakes at my current level, I'll never be given the opportunity to move up in the organization.
C. There is no need to prepare for a leadership position that I may never reach.
D. I'll have time to learn about leadership when I'm placed in a position of leadership.

If you answered "True" to question A or B, consider the following:

1. How are you learning to lead? What opportunities do you currently have that could further develop your leadership skills?
2. How often do you volunteer to take ownership of a project or lead others? If you are doing only what is required in your position, how do you intend to stand out from your

coworkers?

3. This week, try to find an opportunity where you can volunteer to take a leadership role on a project or activity. If you are not comfortable developing your leadership skills at work, find a place within your community to serve (i.e., coaching a little league team, heading up a church committee, organizing a large family or social event).

If you answered "True" to question C or D, consider the following:

1. How do you become the person you desire to be?
2. What can you do right now to develop your leadership skills? How can you reshape your thinking and habits to better display the characteristics of a leader?
3. How does a person prepare to become a leader? What does a leader need to know?
4. List at least three goals you will try to achieve this year related to leadership. Chart out the steps you will take to prepare yourself for leadership:

Leadership Goals:

Books to Read:

People to Learn From:

Opportunities to Seize:

Myth #3: The Influence Myth

Answer the following questions as TRUE or FALSE:

A. People automatically follow the person in charge.
B. An impressive title ensures influence.
C. To influence others I must be in an official leadership position within my organization.

If you answered "True" to question A, B, or C, consider the following:

1. Do you automatically follow your boss, or do you sometimes question his or her direction?
2. Have you ever supported someone who didn't have an official leadership title? What prompts you to follow someone else?
3. Does every manager in your organization have the same level of influence?
4. What determines a person's level of influence with those around him or her?
5. Gauge your level of influence with those around you by making suggestions. The suggestions can be big, such as how your team should accomplish a major task, or small, such as where to go to lunch. Note how quickly people respond to your ideas. Do the people on your same level within the organization respond faster or slower than those who work for you? Who has more questions? Is someone ignoring your suggestions? Find out why.

Myth #4: The Inexperience Myth

Answer the following questions as TRUE or FALSE:

A. When I'm at the top of my organization, it will be easy to get things done.
B. People at the top of the organization have more security than those on the middle or lower levels.
C. I will be free to do what I want when I'm at the top of the organization.

If you answered "True" to question A or C, consider the following:

1. How often do people in your organization question or criticize the decisions top leaders make?
2. What factors should top-level leaders take into consideration before making a decision?
3. If someone makes decisions without considering the opinions of others, is that person a leader or a dictator?
4. What prompts you to consider another person's opinion?
5. Investigate one of the instances where you found yourself saying "If I was in charge, things would be different." Try to discover the reasoning behind the decision. Are you seeing the whole picture?

If you answered "True" to question B, consider the following:

1. How often do you hear on the news that a top-level executive has been let go? Who receives public criticism when a company goes through a rough period?

2. What makes any employee valuable to an organization?
3. What makes a leader valuable to an organization?
4. Employment is not guaranteed at any level. All companies face change and transitions. Some fail. A number of factors—economy, trends, leadership—can affect the success of any organization. Although you cannot control all of these factors, you can make yourself as valuable to the organization as possible. Evaluate your skills. What makes you valuable to your company?

Myth #5: The Freedom Myth

Answer the following questions as TRUE or FALSE:

A. When I get to the top, I'll have it made and won't have to work so hard anymore.
B. When I finally finish climbing the corporate ladder, I'll have time to rest.
C. When I own the company, I'll be able to do whatever I want.
D. When I'm in charge, the sky will be the limit.

If you answered "True" to question A or B, consider the following:

1. What are the top leaders in your organization responsible for? How would the company be affected if they slowed down or lost focus?

2. Do you expect more from the leaders in your organization than those they lead?
3. What are your reasons for wanting to reach a higher level of leadership?
4. Take a closer look at the top leaders in your organization or an organization you admire. Do those at the top work hard to keep the organization going? What kind of hours do they work? What have they given up to attain their current positions?

If you answered "True" to question C or D, consider the following:

1. To whom do the leaders in your organization answer?
2. Do you agree that when you move up in an organization, the weight of your responsibility increases? Explain.
3. Write out the pros and cons of being the boss or owning your own company.

Myth #6: The Potential Myth

Answer the following questions as TRUE or FALSE:

A. My current position limits my influence.
B. There is no room for personal growth in my current position.
C. I will only consider myself successful when I've reached the top of my organization.

If you answered "True" to question A, B, or C, consider the following:

1. Eleanor Roosevelt said, "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." How does that idea relate to allowing a title or position to limit your potential?
2. What are you capable of achieving? What would reaching your potential look like?
3. This week, strive to be at the top of your game instead of focusing energy on reaching the top of the organization. What changes in attitude will you need to make? Will you need to reprioritize your schedule? What goals will you have for the week?

Myth #7: The All-or-Nothing Myth

Answer the following questions as TRUE or FALSE:

A. Only those in top leadership positions really need to know how to lead.
B. My contributions to the organization will be realized only if I reach the top.
C. If I can't reach the top of my organization, then I won't be successful.

If you answered True to question A, B, or C consider the following:

1. The reality for most people is that they will never be the CEO. Does that mean they should just give up leading altogether?
2. What are the prospects for your getting to the top of your organization, of someday becoming the leader? What is your motivation for reaching the top?
3. Start believing that you can become a better leader wherever you are. By improving your leadership, you can impact your organization, and you can change people's lives. You can be someone who adds value. Who can you help this week?

SECTION II

THE CHALLENGES 360-DEGREE LEADERS FACE

Challenge #1: The Tension Challenge

1. How much authority and responsibility does the person above you give you, and how clear are those lines?
2. How do you balance initiating and not overstepping your boundaries?
3. Describe the leadership DNA of your organization and top leaders.
4. How well do you know your job and how to get it done?
5. How well do you do without getting the credit? Explain.

Challenge #2: The Frustration Challenge

What should you do when you find yourself following a leader who is ineffective? How do you continue to add value? Consider the following to help you connect with your leader:

1. Things I have in common with my leader:
2. My leader's strengths are:
3. I can leverage my leader's strengths by:
4. I can carry the ball for my leader in the following areas:

5. Resources I can tactfully suggest to my leader:
6. A strength I can use to complement my leader is:

Challenge #3: The Multi-Hat Challenge

List the "hats" that you are currently required to wear.

1. Define at least three roles you have as they relate to wearing various "hats":
2. How can you determine what "hat" you need to wear in a given situation?
3. Under what circumstances are you most tempted to modify your personality to fit the situation? How could this adversely affect the level of trust others put in you?
4. What tools or tactics can you utilize to better keep track of your various responsibilities?
5. How do you normally react to change? What can you do differently to become more flexible?

Challenge #4: The Ego Challenge

1. Do you tend to focus more of your energy on promotion or production? Why?
2. What I do adds value by:
3. I find satisfaction in my work because:
4. Name a middle-of-the-pack leader you will compliment today:

5. What ideas, products, or services provided by your organization are so important that you would allow someone else to take credit for them even though you contributed?

Challenge #5: The Fulfillment Challenge

List some of the advantages and disadvantages of being "out front" as a leader.

1. Who is "key" to your organization? How can you build strong relationships with these key people?
2. What things are most appealing about the team win? How will you contribute to your team's success?
3. My organization's vision is:
4. How can you gain more experience in your chosen field and as a leader?
5. In the past, how have you put your team above your own personal success? How will you in the future?

Challenge #6: The Vision Challenge

What would you rather do: see your own vision put into action and come to fruition, or help others fulfill theirs? Explain.

1. How can you clearly and positively communicate the vision of the organization to those around you?

2. How do you show support for the organization's values and vision?
3. If the vision violates your principles or doesn't speak to what you value deep down, do you feel leaving the organization is the right thing to do?
4. How do you relate to and align yourself with your organization's vision?
5. How does your work accomplish the leader's vision?
6. How can you add value to the leader's vision?

Challenge #7: The Influence Challenge

1. In what ways have you experienced the challenge of influencing others beyond your position?
2. Do people follow you now?
3. How do you consistently let the people on your team know that you care about them?
4. Describe the qualities of a leader you trust. Do you possess all of these qualities? If not, how can you become more trustworthy?
5. What skills will you learn or sharpen to become more competent in your current position?
6. Are you a leader who can be approached—one who is consistent?
7. Circle the top three qualities below in which you excel. Then list the qualities you intend to work on—along with a short note about your approach to improvement in that area:

Integrity—builds relationships on trust
Nurturing—cares about people as individuals
Faith—believes in people
Listening—values what others have to say
Understanding—sees from their point of view
Enlarging—helps others become bigger
Navigating—assists others through difficulties
Connecting—initiates positive relationships
Empowering—gives them the power to lead

SECTION III

THE PRINCIPLES 360-DEGREE LEADERS PRACTICE TO LEAD UP

Lead-Up Principle #1: Lead Yourself Exceptionally Well

1. How often do you express your emotions to your team? Do you usually express them to make you feel better, or does it in some way benefit your team? Explain. Consider a current team task, project, or goal—do you need to stir up emotion with your team or keep your emotions private? Why?
2. What is worth spending your life on?
3. List your priorities according to the 80/15/5 principle. What strengths should occupy 80 per cent of your time? What growth should occupy 15 percent of your time? What other required tasks should take 5 percent of your time?
4. Which of the ABCs do you struggle with the most at your job? How can you better manage your energy while dealing with this struggle?
5. Create a list of the ideas and challenges that need some good mental processing or planning at a later time. Where can you go to have "think-time"? What day and time can you schedule on your calendar for "think-time"?

6. One way to manage your words is to prepare what you will say before you speak with your leader or attend a meeting. (This is explained in greater detail in Principle #6.) Use the following space to jot down or outline an idea that you would like to present to your leader. Brevity is key. Try to be clear and concise.
7. Where does your family fall on your list of priorities? How is this reflected on your calendar, in your checkbook, and by your family members? (Ask them for their honest opinion.) Does an adjustment need to be made?

Lead-Up Principle #2: Lighten Your Leader's Load

1. What do you need to take care of in your own job before asking your leader for more responsibility?
2. List a challenge that you or your team is currently facing. Now list three possible solutions. Is there a way to work through the challenge without involving the top leader?
3. How comfortable are you with sharing truths with your leader? What would make your encounter with your leader easier? Besides truth, what else should you bring to your leader?
4. What is a small truth that your leader needs to hear? Why does he or she need to hear this? What would happen if you didn't share this truth?
5. What is a larger truth that your leader needs to hear? Why does he or she need to hear this? What would happen if

you didn't share this truth? Do you have the credibility you need to share it? If not, how can you earn it?

6. Where does the "second mile" start in your job?
7. Do you support your leaders whenever you can?
8. Which bucket do you most often use—gasoline or water? Give an example. How can you help to put out a fire that is emerging or is already in full force within your organization?
9. This week, make it a point to ask your leader how you can lift the load. Write out his or her response and follow through by creating an action plan.

Lead-Up Principle #3: Be Willing to Do What Others Won't

1. What are you willing to do to improve your problem-solving skills? What difficult job currently needs to be done that you may have the skills to accomplish? What must you do to take it on?
2. What specifically will you sacrifice in order to grow as a leader this year?
3. Do you agree that a leader should learn to work in obscurity because it is a test of integrity?
4. In your organization, who produces results but is a challenge to work with? What common ground do you have with this person? How can you connect and try to improve your working relationship with that person?
5. Describe a risk that you could take to benefit your

organization. How would you be putting yourself on the line? Would you be putting anyone else on the line? When considering the possible outcomes, what is the best-case scenario? What is the worst-case scenario? What makes you hesitate? What has prepared you to take such a risk?

6. If you are falling short in an area, are you working to overcome your mistakes—without making excuses?
7. When was the last time you did more than was expected of you? Is there an opportunity to do so now?
8. The kind of influence you gain from helping a peer is also gained with your leader when you step up and help others. Have you found that to be true?
9. Do you have an opportunity to take on a task that isn't necessarily "your job" in order to help your organization? If so, explain.
10. Do you agree with the statement that people who want to be effective are willing to do what others won't?

Lead-Up Principle #4: Do More Than Manage —Lead!

1. Look ahead. What are your personal long-range goals? What are your team's long-range goals? What are the organization's long-range goals?
2. Answer the following questions from this section:

   How do I fit in my area or department?

How do all the departments fit in the organization?

Where does our organization fit within the market?

How is our market related to other industries and the economy?

3. What boundaries need to be challenged in your department in order to make progress?
4. What are the biggest challenges you expect to face today? What opportunities do you think could appear?
5. How are you learning to rely on your intuition and read intangibles to improve as a leader and know when something is right or wrong?
6. Who will you begin to mentor? How can you invest in this person?
7. If you desire to be a leader, are you comfortable with change?

Lead-Up Principle #5: Invest in Relational Chemistry

1. How well do you know your leader? What makes your leader laugh? What makes your leader cry? What makes your leader sing?
2. What is your leader's priority?
3. Are you energized by your leader's enthusiasm?
4. Do you have a clear understanding of your leader's vision?

5. What things does your leader really care about at work? What are your leader's outside interests?
6. If you have not done so already, invest in taking a personality test so you can discover your bent and strengths. As you learn about yourself, you will be better prepared to understand the personalities of others.
7. Do you have "change in your pocket" with your leader? Why or why not? How can you continue to build trust with your leader?
8. What weaknesses does your leader possess? How can you add value in these areas or use your own strengths to help him or her compensate?

Lead-Up Principle #6: Be Prepared Every Time You Take Your Leader's Time

1. How can you best prepare for the next time you meet with your boss?
2. Before asking your leader a question, do you ask yourself if the question can be answered by research or speaking to some other person?
3. What are you working on right now that you can "bring to the table" the next time you meet with your leader?
4. Do you prepare adequately for meetings with your leader?
5. How would you describe your boss's "language"? What traits have you already picked up on? How can you learn to speak it?

Lead-Up Principle #7: Know When to Push and When to Back Off

1. What great problem or great opportunity does your boss currently need to be made aware of? Identify the conditions under which you need to bring something to your boss's attention.
2. If waiting will make it impossible for your organization to seize an opportunity, are you willing to take a risk and push forward?
3. Are you comfortable asking for your leader's direction when you're having difficulty with a task? Why or why not?
4. What is the ideal atmosphere in which to introduce an idea?
5. What is the ideal time in which to introduce an idea to your leader?
6. Learn from those around you. When have others been successful in bringing new ideas to the top leaders? When have others failed?

Lead-Up Principle #8: Become a Go-To Player

1. What type of player are you in the workplace: detrimental, average, valuable, or invaluable? Upon what specifically do you make your assessment? How can you move up or build on your existing value?
2. When resources are scarce, how do you compensate?

What internal "resources" do you draw upon? How do you enlist others as resources?

3. Describe ways in the past that you have overcome poor momentum in order to succeed. What skills did you draw upon?
4. How do you make yourself available to your leader? How do you present yourself as willing to help in challenging situations?
5. How can you prepare yourself to fill a leadership vacuum? What would you need to learn in order to step into your leader's shoes?

Lead-Up Principle #9: Be Better Tomorrow Than You Are Today

1. What will you do this year to better learn your craft?
2. Who is an expert in your field with whom you could talk your craft? What do you hope to learn from this person? What questions will you ask? Try to set up a meeting within the next few weeks.

SECTION IV

THE PRINCIPLES 360-DEGREE LEADERS PRACTICE TO LEAD ACROSS

Lead-Across Principle #1: Understand, Practice, and Complete the Leadership Loop

1. What is your current attitude toward other people? Would you rather work alone? Do you enjoy groups of people exchanging ideas? Do you find the lives of others interesting or annoying? How do the people you work with know that you care about them?
2. Have you taken time to connect with your peers in the organization?
3. List the names of several of your peers at work, along with the qualities you appreciate about them. Write down how you can express your appreciation and respect for all of your coworkers.
4. If you want to influence your peers, share the good things you're doing with them. What can you share to help lighten the load for a coworker?
5. Have you taken the opportunity to praise your peers' strengths, to acknowledge their accomplishments and to say positive things about them to your boss and peers?
6. If your sole motivation is merely to get people to listen to you or do what you want, then you are really missing the

boat as a leader. What else should motivate your leadership? Why?

7. Evaluate your current relationship with three coworkers on your level. What state are you in with each (caring, learning, appreciating, contributing, verbalizing, leading, or succeeding)? What action will you take to reach the next step in your relationship?

Lead-Across Principle #2: Put Completing Fellow Leaders Ahead of Competing with Them

1. Give an example of positive competitiveness. How does it build your team and help the group succeed?
2. Which characteristic of healthy competition discussed in the book is most difficult for your team to maintain?
3. Think about the goal of healthy competition in your workplace.
4. How are you and your coworkers currently competing with each other? How does your competition contribute to the health of the team? In what ways could it hurt the team's productivity? Where do you draw the line between healthy and unhealthy competition in your workplace? When does the competition with one another end?

Lead-Across Principle #3: Be a Friend

Who are you a friend to at work? Why do you think the author recommends that you work to develop friendships on the job?

1. What makes a person a good listener? Based on this description, are you a good listener at work? Why or why not? How can you change, if needed?
2. What do you have in common with your current coworkers? How did you learn about the things you had in common?
3. What type of activity can you arrange or become involved in that could allow you to get to know your coworkers outside of work?
4. Describe the last time you laughed at yourself for something you did at work.
5. In what types of situations are you hesitant to tell your coworkers the truth? How do you gauge your relational currency with coworkers? What is the ideal environment in which to share a truth with a work friend?

Lead-Across Principle #4: Avoid Office Politics

1. At what times of the day or in what situations are people at your office more likely to gossip? How can you remove yourself from such a conversation?
2. Describe the difference between a petty argument and one that is worthwhile.
3. Do you know how to stand up for what's right, even when such a stand will be unpopular?
4. Consider an issue that is currently up for debate at your place of work. What is your initial response to the issue?

What are the other sides to the issue?

5. What could you consider your "turf"? Under what conditions would you be willing to give up some of your "turf"?
6. Can your coworkers trust you to tell them the truth with kindness?

Lead-Across Principle #5: Expand Your Circle of Acquaintances

1. List your closest friends. What businesses are they in? Who might they know that could be a helpful contact? Consider their interests. With whom have they connected through their hobbies and travels?
2. When you consider your friends from work, what departments are not represented? Who is a potential contact from the missing departments? How will you make a connection with these people?
3. Do you gravitate to people whose strengths are like yours? How do you broaden your circle and your experience?
4. What group of people do you find yourself disliking or mistrusting? Why do you hold such views? Has your vision been obscured by the actions of one or more individuals?
5. How will you get outside of your comfort zone to meet others today? This week? This month? This year?

Lead-Across Principle #6: Let the Best Idea Win

1. How can you create an environment that allows and even encourages people on the team to share their ideas?
2. As a leader, how many ideas do you normally listen to before making a decision? Explain.
3. What is the most unusual place you've found a spark for an idea? Where do you find inspiration? Where else could you look for inspiration?
4. When someone you don't like or respect suggests something, what is your first reaction? Why?
5. How do you show creative coworkers and team members that you value them?
6. When your ideas are not received well by others, do you take it personally? If so, how can you change?

Lead-Across Principle #7: Don't Pretend You're Perfect

1. What are some of your weaknesses, faults, and blind spots? Have you asked others on your team for help in these areas?
2. In what situations should you be asking advice? Who do you feel comfortable asking?
3. Who would be the best person to ask?
4. What is the best way to gain credibility with your peers?
5. What questions would you ask if you looked at each

person on your team as someone you could learn from? Approach a coworker who consistently excels in an area you would like to learn about. Ask that person if they would be willing to share some of their knowledge with you.

SECTION V

THE PRINCIPLES 360-DEGREE LEADERS PRACTICE TO LEAD DOWN

Lead-Down Principle #1: Walk Slowly Through the Halls

1. At what speed is your team moving? How do you need to adjust your speed in order to build relationships with those you lead? How can you intentionally carve out relational time if yours is a high-paced working environment.
2. How do you show the people you lead that you care about them in their job? As an individual?
3. If you are a leader, why should you take the time to ask other questions besides business-related issues with your team members?
4. Once you begin walking through the halls and your people become more comfortable with you, ask yourself if anyone on your team is avoiding you. If so, jot down their names here. Then seek them out to find out why.
5. As you strive to walk slowly through the halls, what practices fit your personality, working situation, and leadership style? How will you make these practices part of your routine?

Lead-Down Principle #2: See Everyone as a "10"

1. Think about some of the people you lead: Who could they become if they "did everything right"?
2. Is there someone on your team who needs to borrow your belief in them? How can you lend them your confidence?
3. Do you tend to catch people doing things wrong or right? Explain. Each day look for something that one of your team members or the whole team has done well.
4. How does your attitude toward your team need to change in order to become a more trusting leader?
5. What are the characteristics of a "10"? List the names of the people you lead. Next to each name, list his or her best skill. Depending on the person's skill level, place a 1 to 10 next to that skill. In the coming months, find ways that you can encourage and help each person grow in his or her area of strength. In six months review your list. Has the number gone up? Why or why not?
6. What would it take for you to treat each person on your team as a "10"?

Lead-Down Principle #3: Develop Each Team Member as a Person

1. List the members of your team. Label each as an "A" or "B" player. Circle the names of the people you give the most attention to.

2. Build a strategy for how you will develop your team in the coming year. What characteristics will you concentrate on? What books will you ask them to read? What conferences will you take them to? What team-building activities will you plan? When will you schedule one-on-one time with each person (get your calendar out and plan ahead)?
3. List the names of the people on your team. Next to each name, write a brief description of that person's goal or dream. If you don't know this information, make an effort to discover it as you build relationships with your team members.
4. As a leader how well do you use different strategies and methods to develop individual team members?
5. For your team members, what would synergistic alignments look like using a goal, a strength, and an opportunity?
6. How will you help the people on your team to discover their strengths?
7. Who have you been avoiding when it comes to a hard conversation? If a name comes to mind, then you're overdue for one. List the person and the issue. Then describe the potential benefit of the conversation for the person and the organization. Use this process to help you prepare to actually have the conversation.

Lead-Down Principle #4: Place People in Their Strength Zones

1. Review the skill strengths you listed under "Lead-Down Principle #3" for each member of your team. How have you communicated your observations to your team members? How are you utilizing each person's skill strengths?
2. Choose one of the tools listed to help the members of your team discover their strengths. Plan a time for them to take the test. Also set aside a time when you will meet one-on-one to review each team member's results and how their strengths relate to their current responsibilities or additional opportunities they might take on.
3. As you build relationships with the members of your team, ask them, "If you could be doing anything, what would it be?"
4. Ask yourself two important questions: What am I doing to develop myself? What am I doing to develop my staff?

Lead-Down Principle #5: Model the Behavior You Desire

1. Take time to complete your own list with three columns: "What I Am," "What I Do," and "Results."
2. What values do you want expressed through your team? How do you already express these values through your own behavior?
3. What is the "temperature" of your attitude?
4. What three values you hold have shaped the culture of your team?

5. What reasons have you given your people to trust you? Do your words and actions align?
6. Has your work ethic impacted your team's productivity positively or negatively?
7. Develop a plan for your leadership growth:

   What can you do right now to grow as a leader?

   What will you do in the coming year to continue to grow as a leader?

   How will you measure your growth?

Lead-Down Principle #6: Transfer the Vision

In "The Vision Challenge," you were asked to consider your vision. Write the vision of your organization based on what you have discovered while completing this workbook.

1. What do you want the members of your team to know and understand as you cast the vision of the organization? What do you want their reaction to be once the vision is cast? What specifically do you want them to do?
2. How did the vision of your organization resonate throughout the past, and how is it relevant to the present and future?
3. What is the purpose of your team? How do you connect the importance of your team to the overall vision and success of the organization?
4. What clear steps and goals have you given your team so

they might help to fulfill the vision of the organization?

5. What challenge can you give your team that is an integral part of the vision?
6. What story can you share with your team to put a face to the vision? How has this story inspired you personally?

Lead-Down Principle #7: Reward for Results

1. Are you still "catching your people doing something right" as discussed in Lead-Down Principle #2? Did you compliment someone today? Is there any opportunity to compliment team members both privately and publicly?
2. Have you done research on compensation for your employees?
3. Do you reward everyone the same? Explain.
4. What perks can you offer your team members?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JOHN C. MAXWELL, known as America's expert on leadership, speaks in person to hundreds of thousands of people each year. He has communicated his leadership principles to Fortune 500 companies, the United States Military Academy at West Point, and sports organizations such as the NCAA, the NBA, and the NFL.

Maxwell is the founder of Injoy Stewardship Services, as well as several other organizations dedicated to helping people reach their leadership potential. He dedicates much of his time to training leaders worldwide through EQUIP, a nonprofit organization. The *New York Times* best-selling author has written more than forty books, including *Winning with People*, *Thinking for a Change*, and the two million-sellers, *Developing the Leader Within You* and *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*.

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Becoming a Person of Influence
Encouragement Changes Everything
The Power of Influence
The Power of Partnership in the Church
Relationships 101
The Treasure of a Friend
Winning with People
25 Ways to Win with People

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Developing the Leaders Around You
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Partners in Prayer
Put Your Dream to the Test
Your Road Map for Success
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The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork
The 17 Essential Qualities of a Team Player

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The Winning Attitude

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The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership
The 21 Most Powerful Minutes in a Leader's Day
Developing the Leader Within You Workbook
Developing the Leader Within You
Leadership 101
Leadership Gold

FROM *BEYOND TALENT*

WHEN IS TALENT ALONE ENOUGH?

Talent is often overrated and frequently misunderstood. French poet and dramatist Edouard Pailleron pointed out, "Have success and there will always be fools to say that you have talent." When people achieve great things, others often explain their accomplishments by simply attributing everything to talent. But that is a false and misleading way of looking at success. If talent alone is enough, then why do you and I know highly talented people who are not highly successful?

Many American business leaders are obsessed with talent. Some think talent is the answer to every problem. Malcolm Gladwell, author of *The Tipping Point* and *Blink,* notes that many companies and consultants put finding people with talent ahead of everything else. He says, "This 'talent mind-set' is the new orthodoxy of American management." Certain companies hire dozens of MBAs from top universities, promote them quickly, reward them lavishly, and never accurately assess their performance. The prime example he gives is Enron. Its talent focus was legendary. For example, Lynda Clemmons, who started Enron's weather derivatives business, went from trader to associate to manager to director to head of her own business unit in only seven years! Gladwell asks, "How do you evaluate someone's performance in a system where no one is in a job long enough to allow such evaluation?"[1]

Talent is never enough. Peter Drucker, the father of modern

management, said, "There seems to be little correlation between a man's effectiveness and his intelligence, his imagination, or his knowledge . . .

Intelligence, imagination, and knowledge are essential resources, but only effectiveness converts them into results. By themselves, they only set limits to what can be contained." If talent were enough, then the most effective and influential people would always be the most talented ones. But that is often not the case. Consider this:

- More than 50 percent of all CEOs of Fortune 500 companies had C or C-averages in college.
- Sixty-five percent of all U.S. senators came from the bottom half of their school classes.
- Seventy-five percent of U.S. presidents were in the Lower-Half Club in school.
- More than 50 percent of millionaire entrepreneurs never finished college![2]

Clearly talent isn't everything.

THE HIGH-JUMP PRINCIPLE

This is not an anti-talent book. I believe in the importance of talent. How could I not? All successful leaders understand its importance. Legendary college football coach Lou Holtz once told me, "John, I've coached teams with good players and I've coached teams with bad players. I'm a better coach when I

have good players!" The more talent that a sports, business, or service team possesses, the greater potential it has—and the better its leader can be.

Most leaders understand the dynamics of ownership, shared responsibility, division of labor, committee governance, and delegation. Often leaders accomplish great tasks by dividing a job into its parts and coordinating the whole effort. Remarkable feats, such as the building of the pyramids or the Great Wall of China, were accomplished in that fashion. However, there are some tasks that are not improved by adding more people. Brooks's Law states, "Adding people to a late software project makes it later." More isn't always better, and some things are best done by an individual.

A wonderful, simple illustration of the importance of talent can be seen in a sports event like the high jump. Winning the high jump requires one person who can jump seven feet, not seven people who can jump one foot. Such an example may seem obvious, yet don't we often believe that we can accomplish more by throwing more people at a task? That isn't always the right solution. In fact, there are many tasks that call for talent more than numbers. Like high jumping, they require the extraordinary talent of one person, not the mediocre talent of many.

PUTTING TALENT INTO PERSPECTIVE

As I said, I don't mean to minimize the importance of talent. Talent is a God-given gift that should be celebrated. When we observe talented people . . .

1. We Should Marvel at Their Giftedness

Reading leadership books by Jack Welch, I am amazed by his deep wisdom mixed with common sense. It is no surprise that he was able to turn around GE and lift it to a dominant position in corporate America. He is a born leader.

Every time I have the opportunity, I go to Sarah Brightman's concerts. I find that her voice sets her apart from other vocal artists. I often close my eyes and just listen to her sing, marveling at the giftedness of this diva. Sarah Brightman is a born vocalist.

Professional football in Atlanta rose to a new level when Michael Vick came to town. His ability to run a football is guaranteed to thrill the crowd every game. He has lifted his team and the Falcons' fans with his extraordinary gifts. Michael Vick is a born athlete.

Talent can enable people to do extraordinary things, and we should acknowledge people's talent and marvel at their accomplishments.

2. We Should Recognize Their Contribution to Society

When we observe talented people, we should note their impact. Where would America be today if it had not been formed by talented leaders? I have been reading *Booknotes Life Stories: Notable Biographers on the People Who Shaped America* by Brian Lamb, the founding CEO of C-SPAN and host of C-SPAN's *Booknotes* program. The book has reminded me of the talent of America's Founding Fathers:

- THOMAS JEFFERSON, the nation's third president and

primary writer of the Declaration of Independence, was a Renaissance man: He invented the first modern plow, was the president of the American Philosophical Society, sent Lewis and Clark on the country's first scientific expedition, redesigned Washington, D.C., so that the president in the White House would have to look up to see Congress on Capitol Hill, and offered his 6,500-volume personal library so that it could become the foundation of the U.S. Library of Congress.

- THOMAS PAINE produced the nation's first bestseller when he penned *Common Sense*. It sold half a million copies in a country of three million people.

- JAMES MADISON, the country's fourth president, was the primary thinker behind the U.S. Constitution. He was the MVP of the fifty-five men who created that world-changing document. He was a better thinker than Jefferson.

- HENRY CLAY, orator, statesman, and lawyer, was a mentor to Abraham Lincoln and prevented a move by the southern states to secede in 1850. Many historians believe that the decade-long delay gave the Union enough time to build its industrial base, thus leading to the preservation of the United States.

The course of history the world over has been changed by talented men and women who have maximized their skills.

3. We Should Separate What They Can Do from Who They *Are*

Fred Smith, author and former president of Fred Smith Associates, shared a bit of wisdom with me many years ago. He said, "The giftedness is usually greater than the person." By that he meant that the talent of some people is greater than other important personal attributes, such as character and commitment. As a result, they often fail to rise to the level of their talent. Talented people are always tempted to coast on their abilities. Or they want others to recognize their skills but overlook their deficiencies.

Haven't you known people who should have risen to the top but didn't? They had all the talent they should ever need, but they still didn't succeed. Philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson must have known people like that, too, because he said, "Talent for talent's sake is a bauble and a show. Talent working with joy in the cause of universal truth lifts the possessor to a new power as a benefactor."

So is talent ever enough? Yes, but only in the very beginning. Novelist Charles Wilson says, "No matter the size of the bottle, the cream always rises to the top." Talent stands out. It gets you noticed. In the beginning, talent separates you from the rest of the pack. It gives you a head start on others. For that reason, natural talent is one of life's greatest gifts. But the advantage it gives lasts only a short time. Songwriter Irving Berlin understood this truth when he said, "The toughest thing about success is that you've got to keep on being a success. Talent is only a starting point in business. You've got to keep working that talent."

"The toughest thing about success is that you've got to keep on being a success. Talent is only a starting point in business. You've got to keep working that talent."

—Irving Berlin

Too many talented people who start with an advantage over others lose that advantage because they rest on their talent instead of raising it. They assume that talent alone will keep them out front. They don't realize the truth: if they merely wing it, others will soon fly past them. Talent is more common than they think. Mega-best-selling author Stephen King asserts that "talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work." Clearly, more than just talent is needed for anyone who wants to achieve success.

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

So what does it take to succeed? Where does that leave you and me? Can anyone be successful? And where does talent fit in? Here's what I believe:

1. Everyone Has Talent

People have equal value, but not equal giftedness. Some people seem to be blessed with a multitude of talents. Most of us have fewer abilities. But know this: all of us have something that we can do well.

In their book *Now, Discover Your Strengths,* Marcus Buckingham and Donald O. Clifton state that every person is capable of doing something better than the next ten thousand people. And they support that assertion with solid research. They call this area the strength zone, and they encourage everyone to find it and make the most of it. It doesn't matter how aware you are of your abilities, how you feel about yourself, or whether you previously have achieved success. You have talent, and you can develop that talent.

2. Develop the Talent You Have, Not the One You Want

If I asked you who would be more successful, the person who relies on his talent alone or the person who realizes his talent and develops it, the answer would be obvious. Then I'll ask you this question: Why do most people spend the majority of their time focused on strengthening their weaknesses?

One thing I teach people at my conferences is to stop working on their weaknesses and start working on their strengths. (By this I mean abilities, not attitude or character issues, which *must* be addressed.) It has been my observation that people can increase their ability in an area by only 2 points on a scale of 1 to 10. For example, if your natural talent in an area is a 4, with hard work you may rise to a 6. In other words, you can go from a little below average to a little above average. But let's say you find a place where you are a 7; you have the potential to become a 9, maybe even a 10, if it's your greatest

area of strength and you work exceptionally hard! That helps you advance from 1 in 10,000 talent to 1 in 100,000 talent—but only if you do the other things needed to maximize your talent.

3. Anyone Can Make Choices That Will Add Value to Talent

The question remains: What creates the effectiveness that Peter Drucker says is necessary for converting talent into results? It comes from the choices you make. *The key choices you make—apart from the natural talent you already have—will set you apart from others who have talent alone.* Orator, attorney, and political leader William Jennings Bryan said, "Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice; it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved."

The key choices you make—apart from the natural talent you already have—will set you apart from others who have talent alone.

I've discovered thirteen key choices that can be made to maximize any person's talent:

1. Belief lifts your talent.
2. Passion energizes your talent.
3. Initiative activates your talent.
4. Focus directs your talent.
5. Preparation positions your talent.
6. Practice sharpens your talent.

7. Perseverance sustains your talent.
8. Courage tests your talent.
9. Teachability expands your talent.
10. Character protects your talent.
11. Relationships influence your talent.
12. Responsibility strengthens your talent.
13. Teamwork multiplies your talent.

Make these choices, and you can become a talent-plus person. If you have talent, you stand alone. If you have talent *plus,* you stand out.

YOU CAN DO IT!

I believe the ideas in this book can help you. *Beyond Talent* was inspired by something that happened to me in 2004. Coach Jim Tressel asked me to speak to the Ohio State football team on the weekend that they played Michigan. It was more than just a speaking engagement for me—it was a dream come true! I grew up in Ohio, and I have been a lifelong Buckeye fan.

Coach Tressel had read my book *Today Matters.* Because his players were very young and he wanted to teach them to keep their focus on the 2004 football season, the team studied the book throughout the year. Coach Tressel wanted me to speak to the team on the last and most important game of their regular season schedule. It was an unforgettable experience. I spoke to the Buckeyes on Friday night, walked with them to the stadium on Saturday, and went into their locker room where

I saw a countdown clock for the Michigan game that also said, "Today Matters."

Could it get any better? Yes! Coach Tressel turned to me while we were still in the locker room and said, "John, you and I will lead the team out on the football field."

In front of one-hundred thousand screaming fans, we ran onto the field. I'll never forget that moment. Could it get any better? Yes! I was on the sidelines with the team for the entire game. And it got even better than that! Ohio State won!

How does this relate to *Beyond Talent*? Prior to my visit, Coach Tressel had sent me some information on Ohio State football to help me prepare. One item was "The Winner's Manuel," which contained an article titled "Things That Do Not Require Talent." It emphasized that characteristics such as punctuality, effort, patience, and unselfishness were important to the OSU football program. Not one of those things required any talent. Coach Tressel told me that he and his staff were trying to help their talented players realize that their talent alone was not enough.

I loved the article and thought that if I wrote a book on the subject, it could help a lot of people. You see, people who neglect to make the right choices to release and maximize their talent continually under-perform. Their talent allows them to stand out, but their wrong choices make them sit down. Their friends, families, coaches, and bosses see their giftedness, but they wonder why they so often come up short of expectations. Their talent gives them opportunity, but their wrong choices shut the door. Talent is a given, but you must earn success.

In contrast, talent-plus people come as close as humanly

possible to achieving their potential. They frequently overperform. People see their giftedness and are amazed at how they continually rise above expectations. Their talent gives them opportunity, and their right choices open the door for even greater success.

Life is a matter of choices, and every choice you make makes you. What will you do for your career? Who will you marry? Where will you live? How much education will you get? What will you do with today? But one of the most important choices you will make is *who will you become!* Life is not merely a matter of holding and playing a good hand as you would hope to do in a card game. What you start with isn't up to you. *Talent* is God-given. Life is playing the hand you have been dealt well. That is determined by your choices.

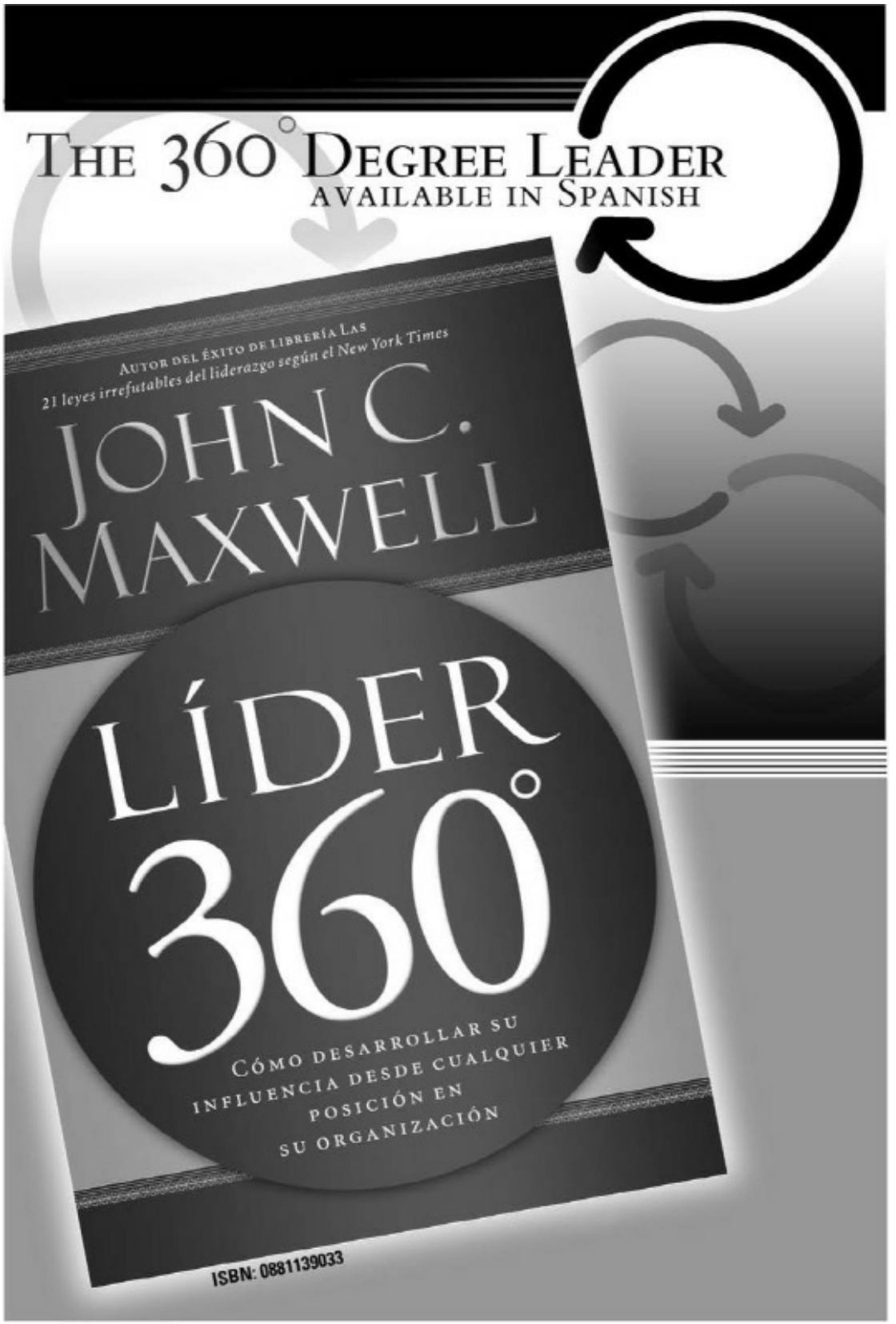
TALENT + *RIGHT CHOICES* = A TALENT-PLUS PERSON

The talent-plus people are the ones who maximize their talent, reach their potential, and fulfill their destiny.

I was reading a book by Dr. Seuss to my grandchildren called *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* In it, I found a wonderful truth. It said,

> You have brains in your head.
> You have feet in your shoes.
> You can steer yourself
> Any direction you choose.

I believe that with all my heart. My prayer is that *Beyond Talent* will help you to steer yourself in the right direction and make right choices that will empower you to become a talent-plus person, build upon the foundation of your abilities, and live your life to its fullest potential.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CÓMO DESARROLLAR SU INFLUENCIA DESDE CUALQUIER POSICIÓN EN SU ORGANIZACIÓN
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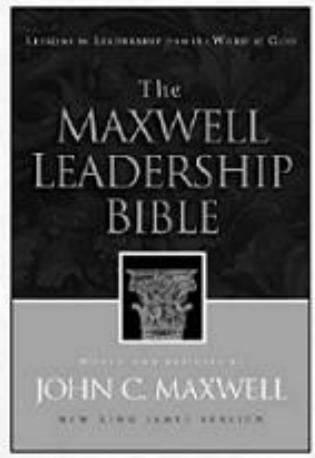

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